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WOODSTOCK LETTERS

FALL 1967

Volume 96 Number 4

INTRODUCTION

As our cover indicates, this issue is devoted to obedience, especially as realized in a Jesuit context. We refer our readers to two previous articles which are historically significant concerning the problem of obedience: "A Basic Ignatian Concept: Some Reflections on Obedience," Karl Rahner, S.J., *WL* 86 (1957) 291-310, and the letters "On the Virtues of Humility and Obedience," John B. Janssens, S.J., *WL* 93 (1964) 231-52.

Our first two articles are printed to honor the late **John Courtney Murray, S.J.**, a professor of theology at Woodstock College, editor of *Theological Studies*, and director of the John LaFarge Institute. Fr. Murray was largely responsible for writing the *Decree on Religious Liberty* promulgated by the Second Vatican Council.

Joseph J. Sikora, S.J., whose death this summer we also mourn, analyzes the philosophical implications of obedience. His books include *The Scientific Knowledge of Physical Nature, Inquiry into Being*, and *The Christian Intellect and the Mystery of Being*. **Heinrich Ostermann, S.J.**, discusses the problem of authority and obedience. This article is important not only for its scope, but because it reflects the considerable experience and personal insights of the Provincial of the Lower German Province.

Jesuit obedience as seen in terms of a mature personal response to God's call for service is discussed by **Thomas J. McGuire, S.J.**, a first year theologian studying in Frankfurt, Germany. **Alexander F. McDonald, S.J.**, is the tertian instructor at Manresa Hall, Port Townsend, Washington.

William W. Meissner, S.J., author of *Group Dynamics in the Religious Life* and "Psychological Notes on the *Spiritual Exercises*" (reprints of this article are available from our office), explores the psychological ramifications of authority. Fr. Meissner recently received his M.D. degree from Harvard University.

Included in this issue is a report on freedom-authority-obedience issued by the New York Province in June, 1966, which incorporates the suggestions and ideas submitted by every house in the Province.

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WOODSTOCK LETTERS solicits manuscripts from all Jesuits on all topics of particular interest to fellow Jesuits: Ignatian spirituality, the activities of our various apostolates, problems facing the modern Society, and the history of the Society, particularly in the United States and its missions. In general it is our policy to publish major obituary articles on men whose work would be of interest to the whole assistancy.

Letters of comment and criticism will be welcomed for the Readers' Forum.

Manuscripts, preferably the original copy, should be double-spaced with ample margins. Whenever possible, contributors of articles on Ignatian spirituality and Jesuit history should follow the stylistic norms of the Institute of Jesuit Sources. These are most conveniently found in Supplementary Notes B and C and in the list of abbreviations in Joseph de Guibert, S.J., *The Jesuits: Their Spiritual Doctrine and Practice*, trans. W. J. Young (Chicago, 1964), pp. 609–16.

STAFF

Published by the faculty and students of Woodstock College. Editor: Edward J. Mally, S.J. / Managing Editor: Patrick H. Samway, S.J. / Associate Editors: Robert C. Collins, S.J., James P. Jurich, S.J., Raymond A. Schroth, S.J., R. Emmett Curran, S.J., Kenneth J. DeLuca, S.J., Michael C. Reilly, S.J., Richard A. Blake, S.J., Edward T. Dowling, S.J., Peter D. Fordi, S.J., Richard R. Galligan, S.J., Leonard R. Riforgiato, S.J. / Book Editor: Gerard C. Reedy, S.J. / Business Manager: Paul L. Horgan, S.J.

A TRIBUTE TO JOHN COURTNEY MURRAY, S.J.

On August 16, 1967, Fr. John Courtney Murray died in New York City. As a priest, scholar, and educator, Fr. Murray brought his intellectual acumen and Christian graciousness to many problems of the modern world. The editors of WOODSTOCK LETTERS *would like to pay tribute to Fr. Murray by printing two articles. The first is the sermon delivered at Fr. Murray's funeral Mass by his friend and colleague, Fr. Walter J. Burghardt, on August 21, at the Church of St. Ignatius Loyola, New York City. The second is a famous conference which Fr. Murray originally delivered to the Woodstock College community on February 21, 1947, concerning the danger of the religious vows. David J. Casey has reconstructed the text of this conference from two of Fr. Murray's personal copies, one with his own handwritten emendations, together with a number of slightly varying mimeographed copies.*

When the editors of WOODSTOCK LETTERS *recently approached Fr. Murray about printing this conference, he said that he would not like to have it printed until he had an opportunity to update it in the spirit of Vatican II. With this reservation in mind, the editors have decided to print this conference not only for the depth of its content, but also for its historical value.*

A EULOGY

WALTER J. BURGHARDT, S.J.

"God loves nothing so much as the man who lives with wisdom"
(Wis. 7:28)

HOW DOES ONE RECAPTURE sixty-three years? How do you bring to life a man who taught with distinction in the Ivy League and on the banks of the Patapsco; who served country and Church in Washington and Rome; who graced the platform of so many American campuses and was honored with degrees by nineteen; who researched theology and law, philosophy and war; who was consulted "from the top" on the humanities and national defense, on Christian unity and the new atheism, on democratic institutions and social justice; whose name is synonymous with Catholic intellectualism and the freedom of man; whose mind could soar to outer space without leaving our shabby earth; whose life was a living symbol of faith, of hope, of love?

How does one recapture John Courtney Murray? No one really recaptures him for another. Each man or woman whose life he touched, each one of you, has his or her own Murray-for-remembrance. As for me, leafing through the last third of those sixty-three years, I remember a mind, a manner, a man.

I

I remember a mind. Few men have wedded such broad knowledge with such deep insight. Few scholars can rival Father Murray's possession of a total tradition and his ability to tune it in on the contemporary experience. For, whether immersed in Trinitarian theology or the rights of man, he reflected the concerns of one of

his heroes, the first remarkable Christian thinker, the third-century Origen. He realized with a rare perceptiveness that for a man to grow into an intelligent Christianity, intelligence itself must grow in him. And so his own intellectual life reproduced the four stages he found in Origen.

First, recognition of the rights of reason, awareness of the thrilling fact that the Word did not become flesh to destroy what was human but to perfect it. Second, the acquisition of knowledge, a sweepingly vast knowledge, the sheer materials for his contemplation, for his ultimate vision of the real. Third, the indispensable task that is Christian criticism: to confront the old with the new, to link the highest flights of reason to God's self-disclosure, to communicate the insight of Clement of Alexandria that Father Murray loved so dearly: "There is but one river of truth, but many streams fall into it on this side and on that." And fourth, an intelligent love: love of truth wherever it is to be found, and a burning yearning to include all the scattered fragments of discovered truth under the one God and His Christ.

The results, as you know, were quite astonishing. Not in an ivory tower, but in the blood and bone of human living. Unborn millions will never know how much their freedom is tied to this man whose pen was a powerful protest, a dramatic march, against injustice and inequality, whose research sparked and terminated in the ringing affirmation of an ecumenical council: "The right to religious freedom has its foundation" not in the Church, not in society or state, not even in objective truth, but "in the very dignity of the human person." Unborn millions will never know how much the civilized dialogue they take for granted between Christian and Christian, between Christian and Jew, between Christian and unbeliever, was made possible by this man whose life was a civilized conversation. Untold Catholics will never sense that they live so gracefully in this dear land because John Murray showed so persuasively that the American proposition is quite congenial to the Catholic reality.

II

With the mind went the manner. What John Murray said or did, he said or did with "style." I mean, the how was perfectly propor-

tioned to the what. There was a Murray style. It stemmed, I think, from a singular feeling for the sacredness of words, the sacredness of things, the sacredness of persons. How fresh syllables sounded when *his* rich voice proclaimed them—even when he changed the Church-State issue into the "ecclesiastico-political problematic." How fascinating a problem proved as *he* probed surgeon-like for its heart—from the Law and the Prophets he plumbed so profoundly to the latest experience of contemporary man. How dear human beings became while *he* fathomed the four bases on which a people must be built: truth, justice, love, and freedom.

Each of you has his or her private memory of the Murray manner. How your heart leaped when he smiled at you; how your thoughts took wing when he lectured to you; how good the "little people" felt when *he* spoke to *you*. How natural it all sounded when *he* ordered a "Beefeater Martini desperately dry." How uplifted you felt when he left you with "Courage, Walter! It's far more important than intelligence." How the atmosphere changed when he entered a room: it was warm, electric, somehow bigger. How he spoke first and softly to *you*—not because you were colored, but because you were his friend, or because you were a stranger—or because you were human. For, as his Jewish secretary put it, all you had to be was a human being and he respected you, even loved you.

Each of you has his or her memory of the Murray manner. How aloof he seemed, when he was really only shy—terribly shy. How sensitive to your hurt, how careful not to wound—with his paradoxical belief, "A gentleman is never rude save intentionally." How courteous he was, especially if you were young, just beginning, fumbling for the answer or even for the question. How gentle he was, as only the strong tested by fire can be gentle. How firm and outgoing his handclasp—his whole self given for this moment to you only. How open he was, to men and ideas, as only "the man who lives with wisdom" can be open. How stubborn and unbending, once the demands of truth or justice or love or freedom were transparent.

How rhythmic he was, on the public platform and the private links. How serene, in delicate dialogue and mid the threat of a world's destruction. How priestly in every gesture, a mediator be-

tween God and man—not only at the altar (so warm and majestic) but in the day-to-day encounter with the learned and the illiterate, with the powerful and the impotent, with those for whom God is a living reality and those for whom God is dead. How delighted he could be with the paradoxes of life—as when the Unitarians honored this professional Trinitarian. How the laughter lit his eyes when he recalled that during the Rome discussions on religious freedom "Michael Cardinal Browne proved more unsinkable than his famous Irish cousin Molly." And how confident he looked as he predicted that the post-conciliar experience of the Church would parallel the experience of the bishops in council: we will begin with a good deal of uncertainty and confusion, must therefore pass through a period of crisis and tension, but can expect to end with a certain measure of light and of joy.

III

The captivating thing is, the manner was the man. As the mind was the man. Here was no pose, no sheerly academic exercise. Here was a man. In his professional, academic, intellectual life, he lived the famous paragraph of Aquinas: "There are two ways of desiring knowledge. One way is to desire it as a perfection of oneself; and that is the way philosophers desire it. The other way of desiring knowledge is to desire it not simply as a perfection of oneself, but because through this knowledge the one we love becomes present to us; and this is the way saints desire it." Through Father Murray's knowledge, the persons he loved, a triune God and a host of men, became present to him.

The mind and the manner were the man. A man of warm affections and deep loves. In love with God, in love with man, in love with life. It is this that explains his joy in human living: at his desk or at an altar, on the lecture platform or in the home of a friend. It is this, I think, that explains his agony in the period of suspicion—agony not because he had been rebuked, not because the underground was active again, but because he knew then what most Catholics know only now, that he was right; because he knew that human beings would go on suffering needlessly, unjustly, as long as the Church did not say flatly and unequivocally what she in fact says now: religious freedom is a human right.

John Courtney Murray was the embodiment of the Christian humanist, in whom an aristocracy of the mind was wedded to a democracy of love. Whoever we are—Christian or non-Christian, believer or atheist—this tall man has made it quite difficult for any of us who loved him to ever again be small, to ever again make the world and human persons revolve around our selfish selves. We have been privileged indeed: we have known and loved *the* Christian man, "the man who lives with wisdom."

Dear friends of Father Murray: On his questionnaire for Woodstock's forthcoming evaluation by the Middle States Assoeiation and the American Association of Theological Schools, Father Murray listed the two lines of research in which he was currently engaged: (1) the problem of contemporary atheism; (2) a Trinitarian coneeption of the state of graee. In his mind the two areas were not segregated. For the twin poles of his life were man and God—the heady synthesis of his beloved Aquinas: God in His secret life, man as he eomes forth from God, and man as he returns to God through Christ.

Through Christ, this man of God, this man of men, has returned to God. It should be an intriguing return, especially if, as I suspeet, there is a Jesuit named Weigel waiting in the wings. For sheer knowledge and love, the dialogue, or trialogue, may well be unique.

THE DANGER OF THE VOWS

an encounter with
earth, woman, and spirit

JOHN COURTNEY MURRAY, S.J.

MANY CONFERENCES ARE GIVEN about the obligations of the religious life, the beauties of it, the graces one receives in it. Perhaps one aspect is a bit neglected—the risks of the religious life, the dangers inherent in it because it is religious. Let me speak of them.

Actually you run one supremely perilous risk—that of losing your manhood—impoverishment, diminution, deformation (if true, a serious threat to our Holy Orders). If you doubt, look about. How many take the risk and lose . . . so many men of diminished manhood, of incomplete virility . . . not necessarily more than in the world. To be a man in any walk of life is not easy; few achieve full virility, full womanhood either . . . but for reasons that do not entirely operate among us. The world puts obstacles in the way of manhood; religion does, too. And there are those who succumb to the obstacles.

Recognize them by certain marks: men who are at least in some greater or lesser degree irresponsible, whose manhood has something lacking, who have been damaged because of the way they have reacted to the vow of poverty . . . men who are dispersed, energyless, because unorganized and immature intellectually and emotionally . . . their manhood has been changed by the vow of chastity . . . men who to a degree are purposeless, their lives not consciously and strongly patterned, not inwardly directed toward a determined goal with all the organized power of the whole self.

Lack of responsibiltiy, lack of integrity, lack of purpose—all somehow relate to the three vows. All are indicative of diminished manhood.

Man becomes a man by the encounter with three elemental forces, and by the mastery of them—the encounter with the earth, with woman, and with his own spirit.

First encounter

The first encounter is with the earth, the material creation. The prize is food, man's sustenance, his very bodily life. The encounter is a bitter conflict with a rude antagonist. "Cursed is the earth in thy work . . . with labor and toil shalt thou eat thereof all the days of thy life . . . in the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread."

Earth is man's proud primal antagonist, and its conquest is his initial necessary purpose. It is the earth that man must work in order to create for himself the very conditions of manhood, of human existence. And the earth is cursed in his work. It is insubordinate to his purposes; it resists him; only reluctantly does it yield bread to him. It is insecure beneath his feet; its fruits elude his grasp. It is a composite of vital forces wherein there is a promise of life for him, but which are difficult to harness and are able to sweep away all that he laboriously plants and grows or builds—and in the ruin to wreck also man himself, to destroy his material life, to defeat his efforts, or so to permeate him with its own insecurity that he gives up and flees to other dependencies, depends on those more successful in their wrestling with earth than he has been. If he fails in this struggle, he dies as a man; either he starves or flees to dependency, and in this flight loses his dignity. He has shirked his initial responsibility, fallen short of the initial creative purposes that must be his—the purpose of creating for himself those material conditions of life that are the indispensable support of his human dignity. Thus he falls short of his own dignity, which is that of being master, by his own work, of material creation.

Admittedly, the elemental character of this human struggle is dimmed in our industrial civilization, wherein so few work on the earth itself and are in contact with its elemental vitality and destructiveness. But though the arena has changed, the struggle itself is essentially unchanged. Men must still work, if they are to be men, and by their work win for themselves material security, their initial dignity, the condition of manhood. This is the primal law.

And when one escapes from obedience to it, one imperils one's manhood. Man is not man until by his own hard work he has bent stubborn earth to his own purposes.

Second encounter

Man's second encounter is with woman. Woman is Eve, *Zoe*, life, the life-giving principle, without whom man cannot live, without whom it is not "good" for man to be, for without her he cannot be man. (St. Paul's law: "*Vir per mulierem.*") She is the second earth, out of which man must live, and through whom, as Milton saw, "all things live for man."

She offers two things to man; one is possibility of procreation, hence of manhood, of realizing himself as, under God, the creator, the active principle of generation. Without her, his own manly life-giving powers are condemned to frustration and sterility. It is she who must draw out from him the seed of life resident in him; and in her must it be deposited, because only in her can it grow and take on human form, and only from her can it come forth, the image of the father, the image of God. Through woman, man becomes father, and therefore man to the maximum, because more fully like to God, who is Father, whose eternal act is generation of a Son. It is woman who puts within the reach of man the act of man, and therefore the integrity of his manhood.

More importantly, it is woman who offers man the possibility of headship, of entering into his native inheritance of rule—of realizing himself as head, *Logos*, the principle of order, which by ordering life rules it. Woman is life, but not *Logos*, not the principle of order. In St. Paul's metaphor, woman has no head of her own: "*caput mulieris vir.*" She is not her own ruler; man is to govern her. All this because she is simply Eve—life. And life is not its own law; it must have the law given it by reason, by *Logos*, and by administering this law, man becomes man. This is the primal fact that Adam mistook. He mistook the role of Eve, and therefore the meaning of life, and so did not know himself. His failure and his sin was in not being a man—not only betraying God, but violating his own nature. And it is this sin with which God reproaches him in Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Adam had pleaded that it was the woman who gave him the fruit of the tree; somehow through her he had

glimpsed a vision of life, a higher life than he believed himself to have. And because she offered it, and because what she offered looked like life, he took it. And God said:

> 'Was she thy God, that her thou didst obey
> Before his voice, or was she made thy guide,
> Superior, or but equal, that to her
> Thou didst resign thy manhood, and the place
> Wherein God set thee above her made of thee,
> And for thee, whose perfection far exceelled
> Hers in all real dignity: Adorned
> She was indeed, and lovely to attract
> Thy love, and not thy subjection, and her gifts
> Were such as under government well seemed,
> Unseemly to bear rule, which was thy part
> And person, hadst thou known thyself aright.'
>
> (X, 145-56)

Man does not know himself aright until he knows he is the head of woman, set above her, having her under his government. This is his part and person; and if he resigns it, he resigns his manhood. In other terms, it is in his encounter with woman, with life, that man knows himself, achieves himself as *Logos*, who is to rule life and not be ruled by it. Through his encounter with woman there is offered him the possibility of achieving the triumph of reason over life (or the marriage of reason with life). Out of this encounter comes life that is human—untamed life in the bones of man is disciplined unto integrity, which is chastity, which is in turn the freeing of all the forces of life by their subordination to reason. Again it is woman who puts within the reach of man the act of man—the act of self-rule, through rule of her. It is she who lets him become man.

Third encounter

The third great encounter in which man becomes a man is the encounter with his own spirit. Meeting his own spirit, he meets a power within him that can give purpose to his life—the power to choose a destiny, and to summon all his energies for its pursuit. Meeting his own spirit, he meets the responsibility for the choice of purpose, and for the success or failure in the achievement of his chosen purpose in this world and in the next.

"What, think you, shall this child be?" is the question put by the relatives of John the Baptist. It is put about every child coming into the world. And no one can answer it save the child himself, when he grows old enough to put it to himself: What shall I be? And what shall I do that I may be myself—that I may exploit all the energy and virtue there is in me—that I may thus achieve my own uniqueness, my integral manhood? The questions are answered by a whole series of choices—of acceptances and refusals, of aggressions and submissions. I shall do this, not that; I shall take this path, not that. Here I choose to stand and fight; there I choose to give way. This gift I will use, that one I shall not. This will be my first task, that my second, that other I shall not attempt. This man will be my friend, that one my enemy. This I will destroy, that I shall build. Thus, in a word, I choose to live, in this path, for this purpose. This is my choice, made independently, freely, in the loneliness of my own soul; and I shall abide by all its consequences, good or ill.

In this wrestling with his own spirit, and with all the alternatives presented to it by circumstances and his own desires, a man becomes a man. He enters into possession of his powers, and of himself —becomes self-directed, self-controlled, able to think his own thoughts, feel his own feelings, meet his own friends with love, and his enemies without fear. By choosing his purposes, he becomes purposeful, and to that extent a man, strong and gentle, clear in mind, able to mobilize his energies; such a man, in his own degree, as our Lord was when he emerged from his lonely desert struggle, in which he had encountered the alternatives that life would have to offer him, and made his choice. Through his life runs that thread of purpose, which is the mark of virility: I am come for this, I am not come for that. . . .

These, then, are the three encounters wherein a man becomes a man—with the earth, with which man struggles for security, the conditions of life; with woman, with whom man struggles for the ascendancy of reason and law over *Zoe* and *Eros*; with his own soul, with which man struggles for the ultimate victory, over himself— the disciplining of himself to inward, strong purposefulness.

Our problem

You see now our problem. On entering religion, we avoid this triple encounter, we step aside from the struggle with these ele-

mental forces. By the vow of poverty, we are redeemed from the struggle with earth; security is given to us without a struggle; we do not know want nor the fear of want. We are no longer responsible for creating the conditions of our life; they are created for us. We free ourselves from the heritage of work. The collectivity assumes a responsibility for each of us; we vow to depend on it, and we do. And that is a terribly risky thing to do—seemingly it amounts to a violation of the law of nature. No man may depend on another for livelihood—a child may, because he is a child; but a man should assume responsibility for himself. And if he does not, he risks remaining an irresponsible child. He risks the destruction of living an inert, parasitic life—living off the collectivity. He has taken out of his life one of the elemental forces, motives that drive a man to the achievement of his manhood. And unless it is replaced by a comparable drive, he will inevitably be less a man—diminished, impoverished.

By the vow of chastity, we decline the encounter with woman. We make the radical refusal to enter the world of Eve—that strange, elemental world of life, wherein is offered to man the possibility of being the principle of man, the head of woman, and therefore himself (*caput mulieris . . . vir per mulierem*). Again there seems to be a violation of a law of nature. And the risk is manifold (adolescent senility; sex is dead). The Fathers pointed to pride as the danger one runs in choosing virginity—a certain hardness of spirit, a withdrawal of reason into a world of unreality because it is isolated from the facts and forces of life, and therefore unable to be integral. Man risks becoming a disembodied head, that fancies itself a whole thing when it is not; when it denies its dependence on the body and all that the body stands for; and therefore risks denying its dependence on God who made it dependent on the body. The pure spirit can readily be the proud spirit—whose hardness makes it poor material for priestly consecration.

This is the danger of false integrity. There is the opposite danger of a failure to reach any integrity—of a relapse into softness and dispersion of an immature emotionality, that has never grown up, been strongly polarized, and therefore wanders into sentimentality, wasting itself, and draining off the psychic energies. In a word, there is again the danger of childishness. Your typical bachelor is pro-

verbially crotchety, emotionally unstable, petulant, and self-enclosed —small and childish in the emotional life. Your religious risks being the same. The chaste spirit risks being also the childish spirit.

Finally, by the vow of obedience one declines the most bruising encounter of all—that of a man with himself, with his own spirit and its power of choice, with his own powers and the problem of their full exercise, towards the achievement of a determined purpose.

Here again one throws oneself on the collectivity, and on the will of another. One ceases to be self-directed. One's choices are made; and there is the comfortable feeling that one does not have to assume the responsibility for them—that falls on the superior. One need go through no particular agonies of decision; one need only follow the crowd, and obey the principle, "*munere suo fungi mediocriter.*" There need be no greatly earnest searching of heart, to discover if there are powers not yet exploited. And hence there can be an end both to aspiration and conflict. In a word, one can live through one's public life, and spare oneself the lonely agony of the desert struggle. In eliminating alternatives and the stern necessity for choice, obedience eliminates also the necessity for self-assertion and the assertion of one's own purposes. And thus it subtracts from one of the elemental disciplines that make for manhood. Your obedient man can become relatively inert, purposeless, and to that extent less a man.

These are the dangers; this is our problem. We have no time here for a solution, but such a solution as we need is founded on a paradox. By taking vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, we risk irresponsibility, childish immaturity, and purposelessness. We avoid the risks by keeping them integrally. Any chipping off in their observance is a blow, light or heavy, on one's manhood. Truly poor equals responsible; integrally chaste equals mature; absolutely obedient equals enterprising and purposeful.

A TALK ON OBEDIENCE: OCTOBER 11, 1966

PETER ARRUPE, S.J.

IN THE MATTER BEFORE US I see a typical instance of the renewal of religious life itself in one of its most important aspects. For this reason I thought it proper to make a few remarks on the subject. The crisis of obedience which so greatly concerns us takes its rise from new circumstances which effectively influence today's way of life. If we are seeking how to resolve this crisis, we will surely not find an answer by simply clinging to ancient norms or by opposing the new state of affairs. We must rather incorporate the new elements of today's Society into our characteristic obedience in such a way that when the new elements have been elevated by supernatural principles, we will have an obedience that is both traditional, in the sense that it is guided by our fundamental and distinctive principles, and adapted, in the sense that it is outfitted with new elements.

In a word, a crisis that has arisen from new factors ought to be resolved not by obsolete but by new approaches. Modern conditions summon us, as it were, to a new discovery of the human and evangelical value that St. Ignatius so thoroughly grasped. This is not a question of some sort of adaption that we are forced against our wills to undergo, or of a watering down or "devaluation" of obedience. Quite the contrary, as a result of providential circumstances, we are now invited to purge the notion and practice of obedience of some foreign elements which once, perhaps, made obedience easier. Obedience has, in fact, now been made more difficult. For that very reason it can and ought to become more authentically Christian and Ignatian.

For it ought to be enriched with the new elements that the continuous progress of the world makes available to us. In the world there are many natural factors which furnish a new opportunity for raising the level of our obedience by supernatural standards and adapting it to apostolic activity. Modern conditions which, at first

glance, seem to weaken our obedience can actually make it stronger and more apostolic, driving us on, as it were, to attain the Ignatian ideal by their use.

True adaptation presupposes progress. If, in this regard, little or nothing is done or is done reluctantly, or, on the contrary, there is an excessive or hapless surrender to modern trends, certainly obedience will suffer irreparable harm. From those apparent conflicts which we now perceive more vividly, we are forced to this deeper understanding and new "transformation" of obedience. There is the conflict between apostolic dynamism and the aspect of passivity or receptivity; between the guidance of the Holy Spirit and a rule exercised by man; between dialogue looking toward discussion of what is to be done and the strictly personal character of decision-making or of the laying down of a directive. There is, moreover, the conflict between the responsibility which each religious and apostle is aware of in his own conscience and the responsibility of the superior as such; between freedom of judgment and the exercise of a critical sense in the prior examination of a question by consultors and others, and full adherence to a decision, once it has been taken, not only by agreement of wills with regard to the goal to be achieved, but also, insofar as truth permits, by inclination of judgment through that sort of intellectual sympathy by which, as St. Ignatius says, a religious man thinks that "what is commanded is rightly commanded" (*Constitutions*, 550).

Indeed, this modern situation in which the Society finds itself furnishes it with an opportunity to arrive at a fuller, more effective statement of the insights and principles of St. Ignatius. I shall briefly recall these principles under six headings and then add a few words on the "re-education" necessary for a renewal of obedience. After that, I shall touch on the Ignatian virtues which come into play especially in the exercise of obedience, and on the "cast of mind" supposed in these virtues.

On Ignatian principles

1. The principle of ecclesiastical and religious authority still stands in its entirety. Its supernatural nature ought, however, to be vividly inculcated. For the old grounds on which respect for authority in part rested are vanishing. A superior today simply cannot dwell in his own lofty place apart from the brethren, perhaps

thus covering up his own limitations and deficiencies. He ought rather to engage in ongoing and friendly conversations with the rest of the community as a brother among brothers. The personal limitations of superiors here come to light more readily and decisions are made with greater difficulty. At the same time, on the human plane, religious are exposed to the risk of becoming too dependent psychologically on the greater or lesser endowment of "leadership" in the person of the superior. Moreover, that authority which used to be acknowledged so much in the person of the superior seen as more or less the sole guardian and interpreter of the divine will, today seems, as it were, to be hidden in the middle of the collectivity. One might perhaps say that it is being transformed into collective government.

If we look at the situation correctly, however, we see that there is no basis for speaking of collective government as such. What happened is only that a way is introduced whereby the community together with the superior, by a common effort, seeks after the divine will. The Holy Spirit makes that will manifest through the superior, through the members of the community, and even through outside circumstances and factors. There is no question of spreading authority through the collectivity, but of a real and positive help which the collectivity furnishes to the superior through its dynamic and spiritual cooperation in order that he may carry out his task of directing the community toward the greater service of God. But authority remains intact.

2. The second principle consists of personal "representation" through personal conversation or collaboration in which a religious may make known to the superior his personal "movements of the spirit and thoughts," difficulties, and objections. Today this is called dialogue and this collaboration is extended to include communications or discussions with a variety of councils, larger committees, or the whole community. Ours, however, if they should really wish to engage in spiritual discernment through these procedures, will be called on also to foster collective indifference, freedom from egotistic considerations, inner independence, and reverence, too, for the freedom of others, which is far more difficult but indicates great progress in representation of the Ignatian style.

Among other advantages of such dialogue will be an increased

sense of coresponsibility for the common good, and, after a decision has been made, a deeper consensus in carrying it out. For the superior himself, there will be a fuller knowledge of men and affairs. Thus the dynamism and effectiveness of obedience will be vastly expanded.

3. Once a decision has finally been taken and, if the situation calls for it, after representations and proper recourses have been made, there should be an eager and prompt acceptance. This is what is sometimes called "blind obedience," insofar as we now turn our attention from morose pondering over reasons "against," and turn our attention to the positive reasons inherent in the matter, or, transcending this order of things, we look only to the motive of faith and charity. It is much more difficult to suspend one's judgment about matters that have been under consideration a long time, particularly if for a long period reasons contrary to the mind of the superior have been set forth in dialogue, than it is to accept the decision instinctively in a sort of mechanical and blind fashion.

4. The fourth principle is one of "delegation" or rather, in a broader sense, and as the *Constitutions* often suggest, of "communication" by which the major superior entrusts the execution and arrangement of many things to a superior under him or to an official or someone else "whom he trusts as though he were his other self." This application of the principle now known as "subsidiarity" is more urgently needed today because of the complexity of things to be done and the speed with which matters must be expedited. But for us this is not so much a question of improved "techniques." By communication in this sense is meant a spirit of trust and of charity that is "communicative of itself"; and the collaborators in whom a superior reposes this trust are summoned to deeper fidelity, taking on as far as they can the mind and intention of the superior and freely giving him an account of things.

5. The next principle looks to "personality." Isn't it true that today we expect a man to throw himself wholly into his work? Isn't it true that the contemporary world looks for what are called "strong" personalities? In the Society we must form leaders . . . men endowed with personality. But by obedience a man does wholly involve himself and pour himself out in a collective undertaking. And when it is a question of our obedience, which is thoroughly per-

meated by theological charity, one's personality reaches complete fulfillment through such a giving of self. At the same time, however, because of the modern regard for personality, a superior is expected to show great reverence, acting as he does in the role of one who serves the communion existing between a son of God and the first-born brother, between sons and the heavenly Father.

But the members of a community, for their part, are also expected to collaborate in the formation of their own personalities and, on the other hand, to make a holocaust (as Christ did) of themselves in charity, a situation in which true personality is brought to perfection.

6. The final principle centers around the manifestation or account of conscience, whose goal can be said to be truly apostolic, so long as the apostolic life is not limited to a mere rendering of apostolic activities, but is understood as the whole life of the apostle. Young people today express themselves quite freely; they often need to be encouraged in the face of some secret anxiety. Security of this sort cannot be found merely in the psychological order; by communication in a spirit of trust, they ought to be helped to arrive at total personal integration and maturity in Christ himself. Sincere and open spiritual communication of this sort between a superior and a subject, something which is much more needed today than before, contributes greatly to that close relationship between the two of them that is described in many places in our *Constitutions* and that stands as a characteristic mark of our Society.

It is immediately evident that one can find in this account of conscience a basis for mutual confidence that is truly spiritual. For it brings about in a superior an inner experience that provokes him to expend himself completely for the spiritual advancement of his subjects to the point that he considers this his first and chief duty. As for the subjects, it stirs up in them that trust and fidelity with regard to the superior that makes obedience more ready and more generous. Today, our younger men want a superior to be dedicated to the spiritual and apostolic welfare of the community. They find it hard and difficult to put up with an administrator-type superior.

Re-education

In order that the Ignatian principles in this new and renewed style may carry over into our life of obedience and our exercise of

authority, is there not a need for some "re-education" of both superiors and all of us? There is a certain new art of governing and art of obeying that must be learned.

As for superiors, this means that with fuller understanding of their mission they may learn today's manner of governing, namely, through the use of dialogue and subsidiarity. They ought to know also how gradually to train Ours to an obedience that is manly and adult. In particular, when it is a question of laying down a more serious decision, they ought to know how to prepare a subject for it. Once they have made a decision or given a directive, however, they ought to hold to it and press it firmly, and do this out of a sense of fidelity to their office and charity toward their men.

Re-education is necessary for all, both for the older men, whom we must help to understand the new ways of expressing perennial values, and the younger men, that they may overcome prejudices and frequently distorted images which often enough they bring with them from the world from which they come.

For otherwise we must look forward to great and irreparable damage. In place of authority a personal collectivism or capitularism will insert itself. Dialogue will lose its constructive power and turn into endless and decision-less conversation. Delegation of authority will be turned into a scattering of energy and directive power, and this would be the root of internal division and common confusion. A recognition of the value of personality would be mere human respect and not respect for the man, and a denial of the offering of the whole man in the holocaust of obedience. The account of conscience would be nothing other than a mere conversation about one's own activity and often even an airing of the sayings and deeds of others. If it may be permitted to use a looser expression: account of conscience would be reduced to a chat about one's engagements and a criticism of other's activities.

Needed virtues

Among the Ignatian virtues which a renewal of obedience demands, faith takes first place. For it is needed more than ever and ought to permeate every relationship of obedience and government. For St. Ignatius, faith in Christ and in the Church, the spouse of Christ, is especially expressed and incarnated in obedience. At the same time, however, in our age faith is becoming more difficult, as I mentioned above.

Another virtue, and one which is in a way the "motor" of all obedience, is the law of internal love. Day by day obedience ought to have less of the appearance of "enforcement"; more and more it is essential to eliminate confusion between obligation and coercion. In addition, a superior's concern ought to be exercised less than in the past through external watchfulness. For this reason it is all the more necessary that everyone have a spontaneous desire and need, as it were, to be led, not by his own will and determination, but by that indication of the divine will which is offered us through obedience. On this account a necessary condition (*conditio sine qua non*) for obedience and the religious life in our time is trust, i.e., mutual trust. We can sometimes put up with weakness even of a grave sort, but we can never put up with bad will or hypocrisy.

Along with faith and charity in the exercise of obedience must always go availability for that service which is the most universal, for our offering is not only for our work, but also of the very disposition of our energies and inner will.

It is easy to see the sort of "cast of mind" or spiritual type that is taken for granted in those virtues which are at work in our obedience. The *Exercises* of St. Ignatius do not often treat expressly of obedience, particularly religious obedience. But the *Exercises* are totally involved in seeking out and fulfilling the divine will in every action; from the beginning to end they drive home that offering by which the Lord may dispose of us; in the following of Christ, in conformity to Christ, they transform indifference into a deeper humility or prior preference for whatever more completely empties us of selfishness. It is no wonder, then, that little by little, St. Ignatius and his companions were led gently by the love of Christ, by devotion to the divine will, and by reverence for the Church to an obedience that was at once apostolic and religious.

For us, it should be a consolation and an incentive to realize that from a renewed experience of the *Exercises* and from fidelity to St. Ignatius, we can measure up to the challenges put to us by human progress and the evolution or development of the Christian conscience. Let us be imbued with the spirit of evangelical faith and charity proper to the cast of mind of the *Exercises* and thus perfect Ignatian obedience will spontaneously emerge, more than ever, today.

RELIGIOUS OBEDIENCE IN THE MODERN WORLD

free growth and development

Joseph J. Sikora, S.J.

The emergence of a new and fuller consciousness in the Western world of the dignity, autonomy, and rights of the human person has been quite amply described in detail in many places. Especially in the postwar period has this consciousness seeped down to every level of society, and indeed not only in the West but in the rest of the world as well. Perhaps the very experience of the rise of the totalitarian states and the long struggle against them were a kind of object-lesson for all to see of the real value of the person and of human freedom. Certainly the deliberations and decisions of Vatican II have confirmed among Christians these insights that are by now themselves part of the common possession of mankind.

This new consciousness has led to some profound changes in the manner in which more reflective members of human society view their position in relation to the authority that must be found in every society. For some, perhaps, it is a matter of finding a new hierarchy of values, of seeing that authority after all is the derivative concept, that the freedom and expansiveness of the human person are prior and that authority exists precisely for the sake of this freedom and expansiveness. For others, who already understood, at least obsurely, that law and authority exist as moderators of the prior expansiveness of being (and even the eternal law presupposes the divine being), there is need not so much of a new hierarchy of values as of a new constellation of values.

While a hierarchy of values simply rates the values in order of importance, a constellation of values does this but also does much more. Such a constellation of values is a grouping of values that tend to be so associated in terms of complementarity, tension, reinforcement, etc., that the consideration of one or some of these values tends to evoke consideration also of the others as somehow correlative, conjoined, or in some manner opposed. Such a constellation of values arises in a given cultural context, from many factors. A constellation is partially determined by "the nature of the case"; clearly authority is associated with the common good. But other determinants might be: past history, more remote or more immediate; the prevailing philosophical trends of the day; the needs of the moment, as in a situation of war, economic stress, peace, or prosperity; needs-in-view upon the horizon; and so on. In the light of such factors as these, a notion and value such as free trade or respect for the rule of law or the unrestricted job-mobility of the person might be seen in widely varying lights, in widely varying value-contexts at different times. These varying value-contexts would not be simply a matter of differing orders or hierarchies of preference, but of various value-factors that would have to be considered, that would spontaneously or upon reflection rise into consideration together as intimately related.

A separate constellation

There was a time even in American, and still more in European, society when such values as authority, order, the common good, and obedience tended to form such a constellation by themselves. It was not that the freedom and expansiveness of the human person were simply unrecognized; indeed these may in fact have had fuller play in a less highly organized society than that of today. But when there was question of the rule of law, the above-mentioned constellation of values would appear without any prominent consideration being given to this freedom and expansiveness. The theoretical recognition, since the American and French revolutions, of the dignity and rights of man was not at all incompatible with such a practical constellation of values as this. Indeed, this latter was very likely a useful balancing factor in the preservation of social order in such a free society. We are in fact disturbed at the recently manifested tendencies toward civil disobedience and the various forms

of protest demonstrations of the past few years.

In the medieval and immediately post-medieval periods, however, such values as authority, order, the common good, and obedience, formed the same constellation and without anything like the same recognition of the unique dignity, freedom, and expansiveness of the human person. In the religious context of the times, this same constellation included virtues like submission, humility, resignation. There was, of course, something of the perennial tension between the individual and society; but this could easily be regarded more as a lamentable consequence of original sin, without much attention being paid to another whole set of values implicit in this tension. With this tension, there had to be also a de facto balance; but this balance was always to be tilted, in the practical intelligence, in the light of the value constellation we describe. For men of these times regarded the order of religious life and civilization as something divine, something in its way more divine than fallen man, simultaneously imposed on him by God and constituting a kind of throne on which God might sit to rule the affairs of men. What was asked of man was above all conformity and submission for the common good of all. And this common good of all was itself looked for not in an expansion of the terrestrial possibilities of the human person but rather in peaceful growth in union with God precisely through such humility, resignation, and submission. There were of course those who would simply disregard this whole constellation of values and seize goods and power for themselves, in an assertion of proud independence. But they would also await the judgment of God.

It is not necessary here to pass any kind of value judgment upon such a conception of human life in society. It seems quite true to say that for men of those times such a view would not do violence to their aspirations so much as provide some hope for their fulfillment. If the cultural context, and the constellations of values, have changed, this would not necessarily mean that middle twentieth-century man is more right. Indeed, a mere reversal of the constellation of values that has occupied our attention: authority, order, the common good, obedience, submission, humility, resignation—to the anti-constellation: freedom, spontaneity, personal fulfillment, independence, authenticity, dignity, initiative—might not necessarily be for the better. If such a simple reversal has been characteristic of

many modern men and nations, the results in exploitation, war, and the threat of complete annihilation do not seem to be altogether favorable.

Not complete reversal

And yet, if there is no question of complete reversal but rather of a complementarity—so that the same constellation of values now includes both the former set and the latter set, with a fundamental appreciation of the ultimate priority of freedom and the expansiveness of the human person—there does seem to be a definitive progress in our appreciation of "the nature of the case." We Christians have as one of our continuing tasks the synthesis of these value-constellations for ourselves and for the world.

Metaphysical grounds

There is in fact more than adequate metaphysical ground for such a synthesis. The existentialist and personalist philosophy of the twentieth century has stimulated many Thomists to a fuller formulation of the metaphysics of the person. In such a metaphysics of the person, both the dignity and freedom of the person and his relation to society, and therefore to authority, can be seen in such a light as to give rise to just such a broader value constellation as we are looking for.

The metaphysical analysis of the person cannot be presented in great technical detail here, but it is possible to give a summary outline of it. One must begin by asking what there is about a person that marks him off as not only unique and autonomous but even endowed with a special dignity, a special call for respect. We note that persons are characterized by their unique conscious inwardness; they not only have an inside of being in addition to an outside, but they are conscious of this fact, conscious even of the very heart of this inside. This inmost heart of their inside of being is their subjectivity.

Now every independently existing being (existing independently of other creatures, though never of God) must have such subjectivity. No such being is a pure exteriority to others. Beyond the domain of communicable and objectifiable formal perfection in every being there is also the unique and incommunicable exercise of existence and activity; and there is also the unique and incom-

municable root of such exercise that is subjectivity in the formal sense, that which constitutes the subject as subject. The inwardness of every being, then, is constituted by this subjectivity, ultimately by the exercise of the substantial existence of the being.

But this metaphysical inwardness is not of itself a self-conscious inwardness. For self-consciousness it is further necessary to exist in such a manner that there be no dispersal of parts outside of parts in extension. Self-consciousness after all requires perfect reflexivity in that which is self-conscious. How else could it have that complete self-presence of the whole to the whole that is the very being of self-consciousness?

Brute matter, and even living and sentient matter, consequently must lack genuine self-consciousness. It is of course true that sentient matter can have genuine knowledge of other things and even a kind of self-knowledge. But this self-knowledge of sentient matter cannot be the perfect reflexivity and auto-transparency that are constitutive of true self-consciousness. The being of sentient matter is throughout a dispersed being, extended in diverse parts, even an infinite multiplicity of parts, that can never perfectly coincide with each other. The actual reality of genuine self-consciousness in man is one of the most certain indications that his being has something in it simply transcending all that is in brute and even sentient matter. This "something" is, of course, what we call the spirituality of the human soul.

We need not tarry here to follow out the implications of such self-consciousness for the spirituality of the soul; what are of interest to us are rather the implications of this self-consciousness for man's characteristic mode of operation and for his relationship to others of his kind and even to God.

Self-possession

As a consequence of self-consciousness, man can be said to be in possession of his own being. And this self-possession shows itself in the very real power of man to deliberate and even to say "No" to the various impulses toward activity that arise in virtue of the existential dynamism of human being as of all being. Such a moderation of the dynamism of being through the possibility of nihilation (a metaphysical "No" that is in no way a positive act at all) is the very reality of human freedom of choice. This freedom of choice is here

seen to be grounded in the prior freedom of human spontaneity that is only the self-conscious self-possession of a subject-being endowed with a multi-directional dynamism toward activity.

The human person must dominate his multi-directional dynamism toward activity and greater fullness of being by freedom of choice. Through the responsible use of this freedom he must seek for and choose the course of action and the pattern of life that will enable him to develop and to expand to the full stature destined for him in the designs of God.

This full stature is primarily measurable as a degree of love for and communion with God, but it also has another dimension. Human self-consciousness is not only of one whose heart is made for God but also of one that is turned and opened outward to community with fellow men. Consequently, we see ourselves in a movement toward our final state with God not just as in a "flight of the alone to the Alone" but as part of the movement of and assimilation of a human community as a whole to God. If communion with God is our goal, it is also that state in which communion with our fellow men will finally be reached in its highest degree. But even apart from this final eschatological communion and community of men together in God, we are already at present conscious of an inseapable involvement with others that is truly a consequence of our human being itself. Our life of grace and love cannot be focused on God alone to the exclusion of our neighbor. That would be to live a lie. The Christian life of grace is an entry into the life of God and a sharing of his purposes and his love. But God's love is not for me alone but for all men and for all creation: that all persons and all things reach their fullness of being in accordance with the divine design that moves all men and everything else in its way toward and into the mysterious communion of consciousness that is our destiny. By our life of grace we are enabled to take as our own perspective on all things that of the divine generosity.

Clearly, the very first aspect of this generosity of love is recognition and respect for the uniqueness, personal dignity, and freedom of other persons. To refuse this is to refuse to acknowledge the other as a person at all, to treat him as in some manner a thing that is wholly at one's service. This of course means a grave injustice to the other; but it also means a grave loss for oneself, a closing off of the

possibility of truly interpersonal communion with another self like oneself, and therefore a closing off of opportunities for mutual enrichment in communion and communication.

Parts in relation

But if the social nature of man calls for entry into such interpersonal relations and for mutual recognition of and respect for the uniqueness, dignity, and freedom of other persons, this same social nature of man calls also for a social order in which these same persons that are wholes unto themselves are also parts in relation to a larger whole. And if each human person has his own immediate personal relation to God that cannot be touched by any other creature, still each of us is also called to God precisely as a member of the community of mankind and the people of God. There is need for a religious social order, and for the Church, in which and through which the immediate personal relation of each one of us to God is incarnated as of itself meaning more than just a solitary encounter of the alone with the Alone.

The freedom and expansiveness of the human person is thus at every level a freedom and expansiveness within a society. But such society always requires some form or order, and consequently some mode of authority to safeguard the common good of the society as such, which is a sum total of goods for the persons constituting the society taken together. Man's way to all the goods of human life is a social way. Had God not seen fit to establish a religious community with special divine guidance, surely man himself would inevitably form some kind of community to achieve to a greater degree the religious goods he seeks. Some kind of authoritative principle, and consequently some institutional aspect—at least minimal—is to be found everywhere in the religious life of man in so far as it becomes socially manifested.

Even in the pluralistic situation in which many religions are recognized as in some manner "equal before the law" and the right of private judgment made in some manner absolute, there is found something of this social ordering of religious life. Here civil freedom in religious matters is itself an authoritative institution that regulates religious life in the nation as a whole, even though not within the particular religious groupings in the nation.

Servant of freedom and expansiveness

But the place of authority in social life must be seen to be ultimately that of a servant of freedom and of the expansiveness of the human person. The reason for authority rests on this prior being of the person; authority seeks to provide that order of life in which the free expansiveness of the person is allowed fullest play in the social context in which it must of its nature exist. This is not to say that the social life of man is secondary; the social dimension of man is given in the same self-consciousness in which the most intimate and private dimension of man is also given. But the order that must be imposed by authority on the free and social expansiveness and interpersonal encounter of men is secondary, derived from the demand for order that arises out of the being of any interacting multiplicity of free persons. The need for authority is thus a function of and arises out of the existence of freedom, not vice versa.

The internal law of our freedom itself, as a finite freedom that is everywhere conditioned by the whole nature of the one that is free, is thus prior to any exterior law imposed by external authority. And yet the internal law of freedom surely calls for the existence of such external law and external authority, insofar as this freedom is always freedom in a social context. The internal law also calls for respect for this external law and external authority, precisely insofar as they are really exigencies of the finite and conditioned mode of a freedom that only exercises itself in a social context. Only in the case of clear conflict, and only to the extent of such conflict, between the internal and external laws would obedience be withdrawn from the latter.

If one were to object that all this is well and good as regards merely human law and authority, but that we must speak in quite another manner of the relations between human freedom and divine law, we must insist that ultimately this is not true. Though man is of course subject to the law of God, this subjection is first of all in virtue of his nature and of the internal law of freedom that follows from this nature. No further precept of divine law, given in some exterior or interior fashion, could contradict this internal law of freedom, unless God were to contradict his own external law according to which all things are made.

Now the first law of the free being of the finite person is that of

expansion and development in freedom, to the greatest extent possible. All further laws, that determine the direction and course of the expansion and development in the social context of human existence, are in some manner further explicitations of the fundamental law of growth and development. This is true as much in the order of supernatural life as it is of natural life. (But of course, those explicitations that are provided by God himself or by his human vicars might not always *appear* to be explicitations rather than obstacles to the law of growth and development. Yet we are in God's hands and must follow his light.)

The most fundamental values then *are* on the side of personal freedom, independence, fulfillment, spontaneity, authenticity, dignity, initiative. But if authority, obedience, and so on are derived values existing in function of the law of free growth and development, because of the social context of human existence, they are nevertheless true values that must always be respected by man and incarnated into his life.

The fact of the Fall

Moreover, this whole consideration of the "nature of the case" as regards freedom and authority must also be supplemented by further consideration—perhaps dominant in the medieval mind (but nonetheless true for all that)—of the actual fact of the Fall of man. Because man is in fact fallen, because his intelligence is obscured and his will weak, exterior law and exterior authority do have a further value besides that of regulating the social context of human existence. In the actual state of man, the exterior law and authority also have an educative function both for the intellect and the will, through pointing out the right way more clearly and even through the threat of some kind of coercion or other. Even this educative function, however, is finally in the service of freedom and its internal law. For this function of external law and authority only exists in order that freedom and its internal law may be better understood and respected according to their true nature by man.

But when all this has been said, it remains that we must keep a balanced view, giving what is due both to freedom and all those values associated with it as most fundamental to the human person and to authority and those values intimately associated with authority and the recognition of authority. If the former set of values

is firmly grounded on the deepest ontological constitution of the human person, the latter set is also grounded on the constitution of this person in a social context and on the actual fallen state in which this person finds himself. But clearly the balance here is hard to maintain, especially at a time in which we see a strong reaction, and even an over-reaction, against a cultural perspective that gave quite insufficient recognition to what are finally the more fundamental values in the whole constellation of values centered on freedom and authority.

This cultural perspective was not unique to the Church—far from it—but its effect was felt strongly in the Church and in the formulation, over two millenia, of the understanding of obedience to authority in the Church. It seems quite urgently necessary that some kind of reformulation of this understanding, on the basis of a fuller understanding, be undertaken. I would be quite happy if what follows helped a little toward such a more satisfactory reformulation. But my consideration is restricted chiefly to an analysis of the ideal of religious obedience, the obedience of those consecrated to God in the religious life, with only a few additional reflections at the end concerning the general question of obedience in the Church.

There are doubtless those who feel that religious obedience is not a viable ideal in the modern world. A metaphysical—at least implicitly metaphysical—view of the human person such as we have outlined might well lead them to conclude that each of us is so autonomous, his freedom of such value, his authenticity so important, etc., that it is now really inconceivable that one man should so thoroughly subject his will to that of another as religious obedience demands. This would not be to deny the value of the obedience to law and to authority that is demanded in ordinary social life; such obedience is demanded by our condition as social beings, and also by our fallenness, as we have seen. But if the primary values in this order are those of personal freedom and the expansiveness of the human person, then it would not seem reasonable to make any unnecessary—in this view—sacrifice of personal freedom and responsibility, initiative, and perhaps even of authenticity.

Values still desirable

And yet the primary values sought through religious obedience remain just as desirable in the light of the foregoing metaphysical analysis of the human person. Indeed, they appear even more meaningful in the light of such a deeper understanding of the dignity and freedom of the person. Few have ever sought to justify obedience in the light of a supposed worthlessness of the human person and his freedom. It has always been just the great value of freedom that has made the "sacrifice" of it through obedience the true holocaust that it has always been considered to be.

However great the value of freedom and of the expansiveness of the human person, it remains as true as ever today that in our fallen state we are apt to misuse our freedom and to disregard the fundamental laws that should direct human development toward the full stature of man under, and even in union with, God. However great a good it is for us in spontaneity and with free initiative to choose our way of action so as to serve God according to our lights, the Church still approves and recommends religious institutes, entered with spontaneity and free initiative, as excellent ways to live a life of service of God and man. Indeed Vatican II only reaffirms the eminence of the life of the counsels, and especially in such religious institutes. And this approval by the Church means that God can still be encountered and heard in the authority and regulations of religious life. Moreover, for the group apostolates of religious communities, some kind of authoritative direction and consequent obedience remain just as necessary as before. The political, ascetical, and mystical reasons for religious obedience remain intact, if they do not become even stronger in the light of our fuller understanding of the personal dignity and freedom of man. This includes even a well-worked out and balanced conception of "obedience of the understanding," provided that this is never employed to compromise intellectual integrity and lead thus to a more or less profound inauthenticity in action. There can therefore be no question of simply dropping the ideal of religious obedience as something more proper to another age and unsuited to modern man.

But it is a fact that the younger members of religious institutes in our Western democratic society have a much greater conscious-

ness of the value of freedom, the dignity and rights of the person, responsibility, initiative and spontaneity, authenticity, personal fulfilment. These values have never been *rightfully* disregarded in religious life; but it has been frequently possible for them to remain more or less in the background of consciousness of many members of religious institutes, and even to be almost eclipsed in some actual practice. And yet surely none of these values is removed by religious profession, by the vow of obedience. Indeed, the purpose of obedience is that each person under it may be more surely and efficaciously directed toward a greater fulfillment and incarnation of such values as these. And the purpose of authority in the religious community is again that it should direct the persons of the community toward such a fuller growth and expansion of their personalities, in which alone they are able to show Christ to the world to the greatest degree, and through which alone they are able to become most efficacious in their apostolic, and even contemplative, activity.

Grace and personality

Grace ordinarily does not work its best results in stunted personalities, in creeping or degraded personalities that do not realize their true worth. The great saints, the geniuses of sanctity and most intense lovers of God—people like Aquinas, Bernard, Theresa, Catherine of Siena, come immediately to mind—were also most *free*, most authentic, most responsible, most spontaneous and creative, and so came to the highest fulfillment of their personalities in the line of supernatural, and perhaps even, frequently enough, natural good. It is this kind of person that must be the goal of both authority and obedience in religous life. Education for freedom of the spirit in God, and not just preparation for smooth functioning (and all but embalming) in some niche or mold, is the highest purpose of religious life. It is quite possible that IBM or General Motors could do a much better job of the latter, and perhaps without so much danger to the human personality—for they could never get so close to its roots as can the directors of religious life.

Happily, the present renewal in the Church is taking cognizance of this aspect of religious life, and many good results are already being seen. Because of this, many of the suggestions to follow regarding the exercise of authority and obedience in the religious life today are by no means new. What is offered here is not so much

a number of novel concrete suggestions as a reasoned basis for them. Such a reasoned basis might serve to calm the fears of some that the ideal of religious obedience is being watered down or done away with, and also to encourage those who already "feel" the necessity for such a rethinking of religious obedience but have misgivings because of the absence of a fully reasoned basis for their "feeling." Such fears and misgivings are very much present today, even when authoritative sanction is given in one or other religious community for some such understanding of the ideal of obedience as is offered here. And while it is no longer possible to be a prophet of renewal, it would still be most worthwhile to offer whatever might make renewal easier to carry through and with better results.

So there is not to be a retreat from the ideal of religious obedience, but a thorough rethinking of it in the light of the new circumstances of Western, democratic society. The principal circumstance here is that of the transit from the former limited and slanted constellation of values around authority and obedience to the broader and more balanced constellation of values around freedom and authority, such as we have described earlier. It is no longer possible for men of our time and culture to retain the narrower perspective. When we think of the exercise of authority and of the duty of obedience, we also think spontaneously of broader human values that all this is meant to serve. We think of the prior freedom and expansiveness of the person, of his responsibility and initiative, and of his duty to be authentic.

Not automatons

The mere fact of a command being given does not end such considerations; it is frequently only the occasion for them to arise, in order that the command itself may be better understood and evaluated. And this does not mean that men with this attitude are more self-willed, proud, and stubborn. Rather, it means that they are perhaps more mature and more aware of the implications of what they do, both as regards themselves and as regards those whom they work to help. It really means that they are potentially far better subjects of obedience, since they will be able to enlighten the authority in many cases about aspects of the situation that he has not considered and since their final execution of a decision will

be the result of much more thought and ordinarily of much fuller personal appropriation. Automatons might appear to some as more obedient; but in an age of cybernetics and robots one does not need such subjects.

But what is even more important than their being potentially better able to cooperate in the formulation of the command (in a material, though not in a formal manner—the command itself is always given formally by the authority) as well as in its execution, is this: their ability to profit more from the exercise of obedience in its ascetical and mystical aspects. The greater the consciousness of the value of freedom and of its related values, the greater the worth of the submission to God in faith that obedience involves. The more that one discerns such values, the more clearly he must also realize that he really does hear through the final decision of the competent authority the voice of our Lord. And the more he understands such things, the less likely he is to slip into the passive drifting that can so easily corrupt the practice of obedience, the more likely he is to understand and realize in his own life the real purpose of religious obedience—the fullest possible degree of the freedom of the sons of God who live in the Spirit. But surely all this is no dilution of the ideal of obedience; rather, it is an opportunity for a new degree of perfection in the exercise of obedience.

We can consider briefly here a few aspects of this new perfection that is possible in the exercise of obedience. First, let us consider the significance of the now clearer and more compelling consciousness of personal authenticity and integration as values that must be preserved in any exercise of obedience. Authenticity is simply being oneself in what one does, so that there is no shadow of play-acting or hypocrisy in one's life (what is commonly referred to, for want of a real word, as "phoniness"). Integration is simply the extension of authenticity to the whole of one's life, so that every free activity does finally fit into a fundamental pattern that is fully consistent. Authenticity and integration are not just "good to have if you can manage it"; they are fundamental properties of the truth of the person, of what each of us ought to be as particular refractions of the personality of Christ, as individual persons each with his own call from God that must be heard and followed with his own response.

A time for reflection

But to act without seeing the value of what we do is already to fall into nonauthenticity and hypocrisy. This does not mean that commands that are not at once meaningful to us are simply to be disregarded. But it does mean that this is a time for reflection, and perhaps even for discussion—to the extent that the nature of the command allows. (Obviously, I am not referring to sudden commands to immediate action that must of its very nature partake of the impulsive. However much we might prefer to avoid such situations, they are a part of every human life. But the necessarily impulsive reaction is the more sure according as the person who elicits it is more fully an authentic and integrated person.)

Clearly, where there is no sin perceptible, there is some kind of value in the commanded action. But there is still the problem of seeing this value for oneself and making it to be truly a value to oneself, and perhaps also of perfecting and increasing this value by careful consideration and by further proposals to the one who commands. This value must finally be personalized so that the action itself will be truly an epiphany of the being of the agent and not just a sterile and automatic performance like that of a puppet. Such a personalization of value might or might not be easy in a given case, as in the general direction that one is to give to his life work.

But correlative with this need for personalization on the part of the obedient subject is the serious responsibility of the one in authority so to know his subjects that he can set them to tasks and give them direction that does really fit their personalities to the greatest extent possible. This is one of the principal aspects of the exercise of authority in a religious community. It must never be simply a matter of getting jobs done by it-matters-not-whom.

Clearly, there is a hierarchy of tasks; and therefore, there are degrees of seriousness in this matter of personalization. Daily household tasks do not make the same demands in this regard on subject and superior as do major decisions that can affect the course of one's whole life. But neither subject nor superior can ever lose sight of this basic need for personalization as the presupposition of authenticity and integration; and both subject and superior must constantly strive for it, each in his own way.

On the most general plane, this need for authenticity and integration has always been implicit in the question of the suitability of candidates for the priesthood and/or some religious community. We have always understood that there are degrees of compatibility between individuals and such groups and ways of life. And there is ordinarily a point at which a personality becomes, not bad, but rather unsuited for either the priesthood or some particular religious way of life, or even for any form of the religious way of life. We conclude that he would be unhappy there, and that he would have undue difficulty in leading an authentic Christian life there according to his own personality and the demands of living in such a state or group.

Continual effort

Something of the same consideration must be carried down to the more detailed aspects of religious life, so that the superior does not make it virtually impossible for a given member to personalize his obedience, or even unnecessarily difficult to do so. But of course, this in no way dispenses the subject of obedience from the continual, day-to-day effort at ever deeper personalization that leads to ever more complete authenticity and integration, first in the general directions that obedience gives to his life, and second even in the little matters that arise in day-to-day living.

But the ideal of personalization, authenticity, and integration is not achieved in some kind of continual introspective concern to see for oneself in a reflective manner at every point how everything one does is truly an epiphany of one's being and not just a sterile and automatic performance like that of a puppet. Such a continual effort of introspection would certainly distinguish one from a puppet, but it would also drive one mad or at least make one a little eccentric! What is finally required is that one really take on, as "second-nature" —which is to say "virtue"—a genuinely religious personality according to the nature of the institute. If this were simply impossible, one would really not belong in this institute.

Such a second-nature means that one's reactions in the ordinary course of day-to-day religious life will be truly authentic and personalized in a spontaneous manner; for now the pattern of such life fits the being of the one who lives it, by a kind of connaturality. The effort to fit into the pattern of life in this manner is precisely

the required process of personalization of value. It is in fact called for in anyone who has ever entered a new social group. There are of course moments in which this kind of personalization is not enough, when one is asked to follow his own particular direction in life—but one which he himself has not chosen for himself and perhaps would not choose, or when one is called upon for some out-of-the-ordinary task. For such cases, there is always need of a special effort of personalization; and in such cases the superior must exercise great care not to ask for too much from the given person, and indeed to consider carefully the best means to insure the fullest possible personalization and consequently the maximum degree of authenticity and integration. For this is only to help this person to be himself in accordance with the designs of God, in his own unique likeness to Christ.

To some it may seem almost paradoxical to speak of preserving the values of initiative and independence in the context of obedience. But in fact they bring a further perfection to the exercise of obedience. There once was a time when a more passive attitude in the face of more detailed direction from authority was felt to be a good. Such a situation seemed to imply that there was more humility and more obedience than there would be with only general direction or a more active attitude. Perhaps this was very frequently the case for many religious. But it does not seem to be the ordinary ideal now.

A reasonable sacrifice

For if the sacrifice in obedience is to be truly a reasonable one, then we must take into account and accept both the advantages and limitations of both subjects of obedience and superiors. In the ordinary case, both are adult, both are endowed with intelligence, freedom, and desire for the common good of the community, of the Church, and of the world. And if each knows his worth, this is not pride but simple objectivity (which is humility). If it remains true that subjects do not have all the facts, it is also true that they may well have some of them and that the one in authority may not have them all himself. It is further true that such persons have minds of their own, with perhaps some very good ideas and plans of their own to promote. Such considerations make dialogue, communication, and discussion a practical necessity if obedience is to be really

efficacious in promoting the greater good both in the work done and in the one who does it.

Moreover, the subject may be perfectly capable, and perhaps even more capable, of carrying out an assigned program of action himself, without need of any detailed program of directions drawn up by the one in authority. This is only an application of the general principle of subsidiarity. The superior should not take upon himself the task of unnecessary direction, of giving really unnecessary (and perhaps also less competent) commands.

Obedience that has room for both initiative and subsidiarity is not a less perfect obedience but a more perfect one. It will call attention to the fact that a vow of obedience is in no way an abdication of responsibility to think about and evaluate even legitimate commands, and to reflect for oneself upon the real needs of the present situation and possible ways to meet them. It will make the personalization that has been spoken of above much easier to achieve in a fuller way. It also requires a good deal of humble abandonment to submit for formal approval by authority the ideas and plans that have been nourished and cherished in one's own heart. The same is needed to retain real willingness to stand corrected for proposals and for action *after* we have stuck our necks out by an exercise of initiative in making proposals or by our exercise of independence in the scope of action allowed us by the principle of subsidiarity, when such correction should prove necessary. And such an obedience will also make for better results in work, and for a continuing growth and development of the personality in the face of the various challenges that it must confront in the course of life. With such a notion of obedience, there would be far less temptation for some religious to avoid the necessity for personal decisions and personal responsibility, in a kind of passive waiting on the word of the superior—a waiting which could even take the especially perverse form of doing nothing especially worthwhile until one hears some kind of authoritative command.

Such an approach to obedience as that we describe must also show the greatest regard for the primary role of the individual agent in the individual situation. He continues to be personally responsible for the way in which he acts in this situation, notwithstanding the directive of authority. He continues to be called to the greater

good in such a situation. It is true that this would not justify the subject in his simple departure from what has been commanded, on the ground of some supposed—though not verified—inspiration of the Holy Spirit. But it does mean that one must be attentive to the movement of the Spirit and the light of native intelligence not only in the superior but also in the subject, and that final judgment and command should when possible arise out of a consideration of the light that both have to offer. One may say that the guidance of the Spirit here is not to be found in its fulness except in both taken together (though of course the formal prerogative of command is reserved to the one in authority).

Broader concepts

This means a considerably broader concept of the capacity and duty of representation than that which we sometimes find. It is not that the subject objects only when he apprehends a command to be clearly sinful, or that he makes his contribution to fuller understanding of the situation only after the command has been given. Rather, he must actually cooperate with the superior in arriving at the final determination. It is true that the superior ultimately has the formal role; he must finally determine what is to be done. But this can only be done properly if the genuine material role of the subject be respected.

While there are matters that obviously require no consultation, there are also matters that can only be adequately considered by taking into account the information, views, and needs of the subject. And this is true not only in the case of individual persons but also of the community as a whole. There are times when the entire community ought to be consulted, either individually or as a group. It is of course true that the superior must care not only for the individual good but also for the common good; but it is not at all true that he alone is able to know and to care for this common good. But if this is an insistence on a real right of the subject to be heard, it is also a call to the responsibility of subjects and communities to reflect on such matters as arise and to make known to the superior, to the extent that seems useful and profitable, the results of their reflection. Obviously there is here great need of discretion and balance in both superior and subject, not to speak of mutual respect and tact.

Closely related to respect for the primary place of the individual agent who must act in the individual situation is the need for authority to refrain from imposing obligations and making commands in some domains. This is not only true as regards purely internal matters of conscience, where such commands would have simply no force at all, and as regards external acts like the casting of a civil or ecclesiastical ballot, that of their very nature flow directly from an internal judgment of conscience and again would not be in any way subject to such a command, but also as regards wide areas of human activity that are too intimate and personal to be properly regulated by such means. To many today these areas seem much wider than before. For example, the precise time of some spiritual exercises perhaps ought to be much more a matter of individual discretion (though this does not preclude assigning a certain period as in general more favorable or more preferred, and consequently calling for more than the ordinary conditions of silence in the house). Or perhaps the hours of rising and retiring are just too much an individual concern to call for anything except some general advice rather than a precise note on a daily order. But be it noted that there is no question here of concessions so much as a situation in which too precise and detailed a regulation might become a simply unreasonable imposition, one that fails to take into account the unavoidable fact of human differences. But it should not be necessary to go further here into the wide range of possibilities, from the unreasonable imposition to the merely silly custom that is nevertheless insisted upon.

Conscientious objection

Also related to this primary personal responsibility of the one who must act in the individual situation, even though he be commanded, is the matter of conscientious objection. In the ordinary case, the occasion for such a conflict between the conscience of a subject and the command of the superior should not be allowed to arise. If the regard of both subject and superior for the values of authenticity, integration, personalization, and responsibility is also enlightened by continual dialogue, it should be possible for the most part to avoid this conflict. So far as possible the superior should simply refrain from giving a command that would create such a conflict for a given individual. Clearly, such an occasion could

be circumvented in many instances by reassignment of the one in question, or by finding another man to do a particular job. But the concrete likelihood of conscientious objection in a given instance should also be an occasion for the superior to weigh seriously the reasons that one might have for such conscientious objection, which sometimes might even aid in enlightening his own conscience.

But if the conflict cannot be avoided, and all appeals to higher authority by the subject are exhausted and fruitless, then there is need for the authority itself to call in others to consider the conflict and to suggest possible courses of action to both subject and superior. (The recent legislation of the 31st General Congregation makes provision for such action in the Society, even to the extent of calling in someone from outside the Society itself.) Perhaps this will finally resolve the problem. But if it does not, then it seems that the time has come for such a subject, with as much good will as possible on all sides, to be freed from his vows so that he may follow the light of his conscience in a more untroubled manner.

But the most important aspect of religious obedience in the light of our new constellation of values is its significance as a *means* and not an end. It is of its nature a means to the growth and development of the person and of true personal freedom of spirit in the love and service of God. It must lead to greater love, but it would not do this if it were to result in seriously stunting this personal growth and in creating neurotic dependency rather than a fuller freedom of the spirit in the service of God. Mere mechanical performance in a rut might sometimes look like humble, devoted service and ascetical success. But it could just as well result from numbness and even a certain indifference that can arise in slaves of a system. This would not be a life of love, or at least not a life of very vital and intense love.

But such comments as these do not throw the burden of the effort mainly on superiors. It is true that they must take care that they use their authority and the instrument of obedience to help religious grow more surely and more fully into men and women completely in love with God and devoted to his service, and to avoid so far as they can the perversion of this powerful ascetical, and even mystical, instrument. But the primary burden is still on the subject of obedience, who must continually strive to see the

place and use of obedience in his life. It is not an escape from responsibility and from the necessity of personal growth and development to full freedom of spirit. It is, however, still a very great value, in the context of the whole value constellation of which we have spoken so much, that is still at present what it has been in the past, an efficacious means of personal growth in Christian life and Christian freedom of spirit.

And if obedience was so powerful a means in the past, notwithstanding an inadequate explicitation of its larger context, it can be even more effective at present and in the future, in the light of the further explicitation of this context that has become possible in the twentieth century. From this perspective, religious obedience is much more than a viable ideal in the modern world. It can be now even more fully what it has always been—a way to the highest perfection of human personality even in the natural order but especially in the supernatural life of love and service of both God and man.

Is it possible for such a conception of religious obedience as we have been describing really to become widespread in the Church? In fact we can already see it in many younger religious, who do not yet possess authority in their communities, and in more than a few of those who do have authority. I believe that, generally speaking, the Decree on Obedience of the 31st General Congregation pretty well says many of the same things.

This does not mean that the older view was "wrong." Rather, it means that the development of human culture also permits further development and perfection of the forms and means of spiritual life. Surely this should not be unexpected or unwelcome. Such a move toward a fuller freedom of the spirit under obedience is called for by the signs of the times. But it is also in deepest accordance with the fundamental dynamism of the life of grace, that grace whose first effect and last goal is a fuller freedom of the spirit for an expansive personal growth in the life of knowing, loving, and serving God.

Problem of adjustment

But there is a very real problem of adjustment to this development. There are many older men, and many outside the strong influence of Western social thought, who simply do not yet appre-

ciate the idea of man that is behind it, for whom the new and fuller constellation of values around authority and obedience has not yet taken shape. Such a cultural difference calls for, and will continue for some time to call for, a great deal of patience and tolerance on both sides and a considerable and prolonged effort toward mutual understanding. And those of us who feel that "the future is on our side" in this matter must not fail to recognize that the great saints of the Church were produced by God in that earlier cultural context; we have yet to see the saints that we hope God will produce in the new one. We must still only *hope* to become religious as good as so many that have gone before us, though in our own somewhat different way.

The consideration of religious obedience that we have just completed has implications far beyond religious life itself. Surely the constellation of values around authority and obedience that has been noted here should have some impact on the exercise of authority in any sphere of human activity. But it seems especially appropriate to add here a few reflections concerning the significance of a "new spirit" in the Church. Still, in doing so, I would not wish to be identified with some postconciliar extremists who seem to think that freedom means license for indiscriminate criticism, or even for doing whatever one pleases in a total disregard of authority and law in the Church.

There had been, in the preconciliar Church, something of an emphasis on obedience as mere, almost passive, conformity to authoritative decrees. One did see at times a use of authority that treated Christians as spiritual children who must inevitably stay that way, instead of educating them for spiritual adulthood and recognizing that in fact there are some who already are rather mature Christians whose views call for respect even from those in authority. Communication and dialogue were at a minimum between the Christian people and the authority of pope, bishops, and administrative hierarchies. Possible organs of public opinion in the Church were kept, for the most part, under rather tight control. Subsidiarity was regarded by many in authority not as an ideal, but rather as a somewhat necessary evil that should be overcome as much as possible. Spontaneous initiative tended to be distrusted rather than applauded by a fair number of those in authority. The

assumption seemed to be made by many that Christians would not in fact grow very much in personal Christian life, and should not grow in interior freedom of spirit and capacity for independent critical judgment even in affairs of the Church.

Rising tension

But such a mentality was becoming increasingly difficult to maintain quite some time before Vatican II. With the growing postwar consciousness of the values on which we have dwelt so much in this paper, a rising tension between the aspirations of men more conscious than ever before of their personal dignity, freedom, and call to interior freedom of spirit, and the de facto regime of political government in the Church that reflected the values of an earlier cultural order, could not be avoided. In the providence of God, Pope John XXIII was the man who "opened the windows" in the Church.

Vatican II surely produced a general program of renewal that is directed away from the older regime toward a new one that should have more vividly before its eyes the context and purpose of authority and obedience that we have described—the free growth and development of human persons toward spiritual adulthood with its possibilities for mature love and full responsibility in the highest attainable degrees of freedom of spirit. Perhaps it is unnecessary to dwell again on the details of what Vatican II has done. The spirit of Vatican II is very much in evidence, both in many concrete results already achieved, and in an even more evident vocal aspiration for more to come. In such an agitated time there are of course also those spirits that have not understood, and some call for the return to the old regime while others call for the virtual abolition of genuine authority in the Church. It is very hard to say which group is more to be feared. Perhaps we should not fear either one very much, but rather be patient with them, pray for them, parry them, correct them when clearly necessary, but "never take nonsense *too* seriously." They will settle down and adjust to the new order of things, with both its authority and its freedom. Or they will simply leave the Church, preferring their light to the light of the Church. I do not see that we can deny them their freedom to make such a choice.

SHARED DECISION-MAKING IN THE CHURCH AND IN RELIGIOUS ORDERS

the Church and religious orders are communities

Heinrich Ostermann, S.J.

The question of shared decision-making concerns not only the economic and social areas of life, but also embraces the entire Church, including religious orders. Has the swelling criticism of the Church and the religious orders come down to this: that many voices could not openly express their opinion, that the authorities always felt themselves *a priori* to be in full possession of truth and infallibility, and that many valuable resources lay untapped?

Without doubt, the Second Vatican Council has brought about a change in the image of the Church. The Church no longer exists *prima facie* as a pope-Church, or as hierarchical Church, but rather as the people of God united in Christ their head, in which all, from the pope to the last layman, contribute their part, in their own way, to the building up of the whole. Certainly the pope still appears as the visible head of the Church. But he appears less as an isolated ruler over against the mass of Christians, and more as head of the Church, in whom the whole Church expresses itself and makes itself heard. He is, as it were, the spokesman of the entire Church and gives expression to the stirring of the Spirit in the Church. The pope is not to be thought of except in vital union with the body of bishops to whom he is collegially bound. He will consult with the bishops of the world on magisterial decisions, just as he did in the case of the pronouncement on the Assumption of Mary. In the future, he will

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leave the working out of the pastoral office in large part to the bishops. The college of bishops is no longer a dream, but a reality.

Just as the pope is no longer to be thought of except in relation to the bishops, the bishop, by the same token, is not to be thought of as isolated either. He is no longer confined to his bishopric, but bears responsibility for the whole Church. He feels duty-bound to establish ties with his fellow bishops and to institute bishops' conferences. Even in his own diocese, a bishop turns much more to his priests and laymen for advice. The Church is now unthinkable without the responsible cooperation of the laity. The Council established theologically that the Holy Spirit works in the whole Church and not just in the hierarchy. One becomes especially conscious of this in the *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, No. 12, which states: "The body of the faithful as a whole, anointed as they are by the Holy One (cf. Jn. 2:20, 27), cannot err in matters of belief . . . when, 'from the bishops down to the last member of the laity,' it shows universal agreement in matters of faith and morals."

The Church exists as a community, in which the salvific will of God for man becomes highly evident, and which as a whole must feel itself responsible for the salvation of all mankind. There is something like a common will, a general mission of the whole Church, which includes all members, each in his own way. The Holy Spirit can use everyone in the Church for the working out of the mysterious plans of God. All can be bearers of sacred messages and charisms. All can be called to the unfolding of the good news and to the work of saving others, and all must keep themselves open to a call from God. This common responsibility does not mean anarchy in the Church. The Church is a well-ordered whole, with different offices and services. It would be going too far to describe the relation between authority and obedience in the life of the Church as Alois Müller did in his book, *Befehl und Gehorsam im Leben der Kirche*.

One thing seems to be decisive: first and foremost, the Church as a whole in all its members has to reveal the truth of Christ, to make him known, and to mediate his life. The proper formulation and preservation of truth are secondary. Out of concern over this second question we had forgotten the first. Instead of open questions about genuine truth, about the guarantees of infallibility, about the

right of the Church to provide true discipline and to command, the majority of the faithful were in fact prohibited from directing themselves to the spread of the Church and the work of salvation. Out of anxiety that something false might be preached, we restricted the right of preaching to clerics and to the ecclesiastical magisterium. Out of anxiety that the sacraments might not be administered properly, we considered the administration of sacraments to be the exclusive prerogative of the priest. Out of fear that theology might fall into the wrong hands, it was confined to the brains of a few consecrated souls, as if the oils of consecration would confer the ability to think. . . . Practically speaking, the responsibility for the mediation of salvation, which according to the will of Christ devolved on the whole Church, was restricted to a small circle, mainly the ordinary and extraordinary magisterium. The others were freed of active responsibility. They were not even informed, or else they were informed in the way we teach children. No one took them seriously. They had to hear what was suitable for their ears, and they had to obey because they did not seem capable of anything else. And all this despite the fact that the Church, from pope to last layman, is fully responsible for the mission of Christ to the whole world!

Shared decision-making in the Society of Jesus

Are shared decision-making and obedience contradictory? If one juxtaposes the two words "co-determination" and "Society of Jesus," they seem at first to connote an opposition. For behind "Society of Jesus" stands obedience, which is supposed to be *the* virtue of Jesuits. Yet obedience and co-determination seem to exclude each other. The Jesuit is thought of as "the staff in the hand of the old man" or as "a corpse," which one can shove around at will. In this picture, obedience means that the superior stands over against the mass of subjects, so that one man with absolute authority, excluding of course sinful commands, rules over his subjects. In this understanding of obedience, the general execution of the Society's will starts with the superiors, who in the manner of a secret political cabinet, seek to legislate to the mass of subjects the mysterious biddings of God for our time in the form of concrete commands, without informing either themselves or their subjects. This style of governing a religious order belonged to the Church of the past,

which was conceived of as strongly centralized, and in which the middle ranks of bishops and priests had little, and the laity nothing at all, to do with the planning, and had little or nothing to say about it.

But because the Church has experienced a change in style of government, and above all, in its understanding of itself, and because the Church as a whole has become conscious of its responsibility for the salvation of the world, structures within the Church, such as religious orders, cannot withdraw from this development, because they themselves are part of this Church.

What task does obedience really have in a religious order?

Outsiders often have the impression that religious have entered their orders to obey, to give up their own will, to renounce their freedom. That is a gross error. Such an intention would be perverse. For freedom as a capacity for self-determination and responsibility makes a man to be what he is, a person. If a man really wanted to renounce his freedom, then he would be denying his humanity. Obedience as the extinction of freedom is inhuman and nonsensical. It only makes sense when it frees a man for a life lived at a higher level of freedom and when it enables him to become more capable of self-determination and responsibility than he would have been without obedience. Behind the idea of obedience is not the idea of the sacrifice of freedom, but rather the better, more purposeful pledging of freedom to the final goals which God has given us. Why does a man go into a religious order? Not to give up freedom, because freedom holds too many dangers, but mostly to make freedom more purposeful. Of course, a man must thereby accept a certain measure of restriction inasmuch as he lets a community and its representatives assign the field of his own free effort. A man enters a religious order to do more for the kingdom of God.

St. Ignatius and his contemporaries did not bind themselves together to obey, but rather to serve the Church together in a special way. They had a common desire to serve the Church and together they worked out possible outlets for their commitment. Later they chose from their group a superior, because a community cannot last without a firm organization. This superior is not, however, an individual authority cut loose from the religious community, but rather an expression of the community will. For this reason the superior does not lead a life next to or over the community but in

its midst, so that he can be a real expression of the community. Apart from the unity of a religious order, or from the will of the community, obedience seems as arbitrary as papal directives and magisterial pronouncements which are given without reference to the common beliefs and common life of the Church. How did Ignatius himself view the Order? Not as a monarchy with absolutist leadership, but as analogous to the Church itself, and, to be sure, in terms of the relationship of Christ, the head of the Church, to his body because the head and body make up an organic whole.

The relationship of superiors to members is, first of all, a spiritual one, analogous to the union of love between Christ the head and his members. Obedience, therefore, is not conceived of as a legal relation between a superior, who has power and exercises it, and his subjects who have to obey.

If we compare this notion of obedience with the reality, then it is one-sided and distorted in the sense that it is interpreted too legally. Then the will of the superior has the force of an expression of one man's power and the obedience of the subject is no more than a response to this expression of power.

True obedience, therefore, would come down to this: a religious order perceives itself as a community which has in its superior a head, in whom the common life and salvific will of the whole expresses and proclaims itself. Only when we understand obedience in this way does the will of the community find its expression in obedience. Then, the whole community has a voice and only then is it possible to avoid differences.

The religious foundation of obedience

Only from this viewpoint does a religious foundation for obedience seem really possible. A religious order is a part of the Church analogous to the union of Christ the head and his members. The order is approved by the Church. That is, the Church has declared that the purposes of the order do not conflict with those of the Church but rather they overlap, so that the religious order looks to the genuine interests of the Church and participates vitally in her salvific mission. If the salvific will of God is in any way known and manifest in the Church, it is also manifest in religious orders.

Thus, in the common will of the religious order as it proclaims itself in striving for the sanctification of all its members and in the

will to the apostolate of the Church, the salvific will of the Church becomes visible. Obedience, as the expression of the collective will of the religious order lies along the same line as the salvific will of the Church. If we see in the Church a visible sign of the salvific will of God, then we also see it in the religious order, which binds itself to the Church and to its concrete salvific will. Because of this, the members of the order should be recognized in their superiors, who make known the concrete salvific will of the Church and of this ecclesiastical community, as revealers of the divine will and representatives of Christ.

Basically, religious obedience is open to the same problem as ecclesiastical obedience, with all the possibilities of error. But do we always have to look at the negative side and not at the positive possibilities for the salvific will of God to reveal itself concretely and historically in the visible community of the Church and in one of its parts? The more obedience corresponds to the contemporary needs of the whole Church and unites with it, and the more it expresses the common will of the community and above all, the resources which vitally represent such a community, then the more the conviction persists that it is the expression of the objective salvific will of God in his Church. Also, in this view of religious obedience, it may not be reduced simply to a legal relation of superiors to subjects; instead it must seek to correspond as far as possible to the universal will of the religious order in the Church.

The double execution of obedience

In recent times there have been discussions about the difference between functional and religious obedience. Functional obedience means an obedience which, for reasons of purely natural expediency, is necessary to the maintenance of a community. Obedience must be practically expedient and sensible. Further, a minimum of regulation should prevail in a community, just enough so that it does not disintegrate and so that communication among members occurs easily and without friction. The assumption here is that an opposition to religious obedience is already existent, Then obedience would begin only at the point where it makes irrational demands, where it becomes a cross for the individual, and where blind following of orders is expected. This view gives the impression that

normal, sensible, purposeful obedience has nothing to do with religious obedience.

But if we conceive of obedience from the point of view of the superior and subject as the collective accomplishment of the whole religious order, or as the expression of the community will oriented toward the salvific will of the Church, then it is a common as well as religious obedience, since it serves, in its common execution, religious goals. Should one regard obedience as detrimental to the religious life when its acts have a maximum of rationality for the superior or subject who perform them?

Obedience in a religious order is always religious by virtue of the goals of the order and the vow of obedience. In this context, the distinction between functional and religious obedience is less important than the difference between obedience of regulation and obedience of guidance. The collective will of the religious order always has at its root a double function. It aims sometimes at the collective performance of the order, which it accomplishes as community, and at other times at the personal development and guidance of the individual members. From the first perspective, it might be called obedience to regulation, and from the second, obedience to guidance. Of course, the two mutually involve one another. Apostolic work is accomplished by men on the basis of their personal spiritual and intellectual achievement, and, of course, in the context of community. I can, therefore, influence individuals by collective conduct and regulation. There is no better way of guiding an individual than to put him into a work in which he can develop himself, and for which he is consistently demanded by the community.

It is not far from the truth to say that Jesuits have left the guidance of individuals to the spiritual fathers, (assuming that there are spiritual fathers who can provide guidance). It seems to me that when the organizational structure of a religious community is not working well, then the best individual spiritual guidance helps little. But structure means more than an external daily order. We know how little a religious order can be maintained through external conformity. We prescribed more and more set times for prayer in the external order to maintain the inner spirit until we fortunately got to the point of almost four hours daily, and with that, everything became impossible.

Structure means vital dynamic structure, under which, in a vital working community, the individuals are working toward significant goals. Such a vital, dynamic rule must, however, be carried out by the whole of the religious order. Authority and obedience in reference to this sort of governing have to express the community will. Behind all of this lurks the question: will we come out of our mistrustful individualism and, in this sense, become capable of community?

How does the common will of the religious order express itself?

It is easy to say that authority and obedience are or should be an expression of the common will of the order and not the subjective expression of a particular superior. How does the community will express and concretize itself?

One can point here to a series of moments which form the community will. Objective norms for the formation of the community will are:

1) the constitutions of the religious order, which give a program of life and work both for personal spiritual development and for apostolic work.

2) the needs of the Church. The concrete situation of the Church after Vatican II prescribes specific programs for apostolic orders: for example, directives on ecumenism, the investigation of atheism, missionary work, and so forth.

3) the concrete will of the pope, who can assign special, specific tasks to a religious order.

4) the historical orientation of a religious order. Certain traditional works cannot simply be scuttled.

More subjective expressions of community will, perhaps, would be:

1) those that come from the general, the provincial, or from the body of superiors. No provincial can repudiate his past. Each one enters office with certain pet projects which he injects into the formation of the community will.

2) the many charisms of individual members, who have fashioned, by dint of personal initiative under the influence of the Spirit, new works for the good of the Church.

All these moments define the community will of a religious order.

I have noted only the positive moments. One would also have to add the obstructive and disturbing ones. Everything coming from an egoistic individualism is destructive. All the ominous croaking of incompetents and procrastinators, and all the flak from individualist outsiders cripples the community spirit. The big question is: how do we firmly maintain the community will? How do we filter it so that a real will for the future results from it, a will which leads in the future to concrete decisions, that is, to concrete directives and works of obedience?

Information as the essential means of co-determination

If authority and obedience are to be a real expression of community will, then the superior must know what the members of the body think and desire, and the members must be ready to inform superiors. Given the complexity of the Society today, it is just not possible for the superior to oversee everything himself. In fact the superior has to decide things which he personally does not know about. He also cannot possibly acquire the specialized knowledge needed in every area. He has to rely on the informed views of his fellow religious.

Since every decision presupposes a judgment about the matter to be decided, and since this judgment cannot be made by the superior on the basis of his own knowledge, those members of the order who finally influence the judgment of the superior really do the deciding. The superior can keep himself aloof from the affair so that he decides nothing at all. But he cannot quite do that either. Admission to the novitiate, to vows, and to orders, etc., depends always on *informationes*. Those doing the informing prepare the decision, indeed they finally determine it. The superior is bound by their information. Thus a religious order does know in its personal politics a high degree of shared decision-making. Certainly the superior himself can select his own informants, and so exert his influence. But this has limits.

After reading the biographies of well-known figures in Jesuit history, one gets the impression that the earlier Jesuits informed one another about their work and plans much more than has been the case in recent times. The reports of the great pioneers were read by all, while today, even in the same house, one Jesuit hardly knows

anything at all about the work of another, and the efforts of different houses are little known by others. So complaints arise about "bureaucracy" and "games of hide-and-seek" in the Order. There is a whole host of traditional means of information which only have to be improved to handle this. Personal expression of opinion, visits to houses, contact with the superiors and the directors of larger works, periodic newsletters from individual provinces—all of these offer ways of communicating and consequently can become ways of shared decision-making.

Of particular importance for the formation of judgment and the building up of the order is the institution of the "council" or senate. In the Jesuit order, as in others, the superior in particular cases is bound to follow the decision of his consultors. Yet in most cases he is free. Thus, there arises the temptation to treat this institution only as the juridical duty to consult. The question then is: when must I require consultation? But the question really should be: how can I claim the best possible consultation and draw together the widest possible range of opinion for planning, for creating consensus, and for the preparation of decisions?

Delegation of responsibility

If obedience is really to be an expression of community will, then it is good that not just one man, but as many men as possible, give expression to this will. Since the community will in a religious order which has various apostolates must find not a single, but a multiple expression, it is good that there be many who have responsibility, and who are cohesive and loyal to each other. Authority should be practiced on the principle of subsidiarity. The higher superior should not interfere in the authority of lower superiors without a good reason. For special assignments one should gladly delegate people.

Again, this does not mean that all possible new superiorships have to be created, super-provincials, sub-provincials, coordinators, and so on. . . . That is a peculiar disease of the post-conciliar era. One notices this in the dioceses where special coordinators are installed. They often try to multiply new red-tape measures without sufficient grounds and without experience. It is enough if those who are performing a work have the necessary authority and freedom for it.

Who should determine the common will of a religious community? Those who have authority, their informants, consultors, and delegates of a religious order who have been selected out of a great number of members. What are the principles of selection? Certainly the different orders have defined these many a time. What qualities should the superior have? A number of categories are listed: not too dumb; not too harsh; not too vain, etc. Let us pass over these general categories. I would like to put the question from the point of view of the Church's present situation. What men do we want to see today at the head of the Church and the ecclesiastical communities?

Until Pius XII the Church was run largely according to eternal norms. For this reason leaders who would protect and rule reliably were willingly chosen. The office of superior was widely thought of as an administrative post. He had nothing to do but rule. This resulted in a distinction between those who ruled the religious orders and those who carried out the mission for which the order was founded.

In the first dynamic phase of a religious order, the superiors are likewise those who represent the order in its work for others. The office of superior is exercised with the left hand, so to speak. That is perhaps wrongly put. We cannot separate the spiritual life and the apostolate, since they are one. Likewise, we cannot separate the administration of an order from the actual work of the order. Otherwise the superiors have no understanding of the actual projects of the order. In my opinion, those who represent the order today through their work, no matter what it is, also lead the order.

Is this true leadership to be established? That does not seem to be difficult. One needs only to go through the province with eyes open and ask himself who works and gets results, has influence, starts new projects, has a fruitful imagination, and knows whose plans to realize. These people must be brought into the inner leadership of the order in any capacity whatever and, of course, into positions which are to their liking. Surely, certain qualities enter in. They have to love the order, and they may not be malcontented outsiders. If they are to be superiors, they have to have a certain knowledge of human nature and must possess a liking for responsibility. Only if this group, which often feels itself to be on the perimeter

of the order but which really represents the order, comes into the inner leadership, have we any hope that the order as a whole will win back its former energy, optimism, and healthy community spirit.

The question of authority

It seems to me that Jesuit obedience, rightly understood, is not inhuman. It takes great pains to do justice to the charismatic gifts of individual members and to contemporary needs of the Church, when it makes every effort to express the common will of the order and to use every means of getting information and advice.

It must, of course, remain what it is: recognition of the unified leadership of the order and the readiness to follow this leadership even when in an individual case it is not clear that the leadership is doing justice to the individual's gifts or to the needs of the times and of the Church. And this will happen again and again. At a time like that, obedience means trials and under some circumstances it can be a cross. But should we dramatize this? Are there not similar inescapable problems in every marriage and in every walk of life? The problem here lies with the individual religious. Does he really know what he vowed?

We need have no anxiety that the younger generation has no mind for such an obedience. I find unbearable the talk of many older fathers to the effect that if the General Congregation does not do something of special importance, the young men will go and become disillusioned. Our younger generation does not tremble at obedience in itself. I believe they want much more leadership and authority than we older men imagine. But they want it as an achievement of the community, as an expression of a genuine common will which they believe is no longer to be found among the many individualists of the older generation. If they feel, however, that the Order as a spiritual community of brothers wants to perform great services for the present day Church, then this generation also will do what is demanded of it. And things will be demanded of them. For me personally, this is the greatest problem: how will a community with a common will flourish again in our Order? If in one province at least, a strong group has this will, then the Society also has a future.

OBEDIENCE OF JUDGMENT AND INTELLECTUAL HONESTY

a realistic discernment is needed

Alexander F. McDonald, S.J.

In the February 1967 gathering of Jesuits at St. Mary's, Kansas, to discuss the problems of renewal, the question was raised whether obedience of the judgment in the Ignatian tradition was compatible with current canons of intellectual honesty. One speaker suggested that in the climate of modern thought, with its emphasis on cultivating the critical faculty, on independence of thinking, on creativity, and on individual maturity, there was need to abandon some of the conventional notions of religious obedience, particularly those associated with obedience of the understanding. Given the contemporary concern for consensus through dialogue among adults in matters where agreement cannot be attained, is it not sufficient to rest content with obedience of execution, or rather, is it not unrealistic to demand more?

This problem can be dealt with in a number of ways. At the actual meeting referred to above, the main panelist proposed by way of answer, though unfortunately without ample opportunity for development, that a correct understanding of the doctrine of St. Ignatius would reveal it as quite in harmony with the most rigid requirements of intellectual honesty. He suggested, moreover, that we cannot reasonably expect to plumb the depths of religious obedi-

ence or to pluck out the heart of its mystery with the instruments of mere natural reason. The Ignatian ideal always supposes the context of faith. To find God's will made manifest through the directives of legitimate authority is a notion opaque to the human mind and difficult even in theological analysis. Our vowed commitment of continuous free response to God's call in the unfolding charity that is religious life is comprehensible only when viewed in its supernatural dimension in the light of faith.

The purpose of this article is not to attempt a comprehensive discussion but rather to touch only on one aspect of the specific issue of intellectual honestly in relation to obedience of the judgment. I would suggest that the Ignatian doctrine, far from involving a conflict between the two, demands the first as a condition and essential ingredient of the second. No one denies the role that candor, sincerity, and personal responsibility must play as the individual religious weighs the value of what he is commanded to do and assesses the quality of his response to the demands of obedience. If he thinks that a particular directive is immoral, inexpedient, harmful, or just plain foolish, he rightly feels that he must be frank both with his superior and with himself. Honesty requires dialogue and clarification of the situation as an indispensable concomitant of the mature exercise of the virtue and the vow. Nevertheless, it seems proper to point out that St. Ignatius, in his bold challenge to strive for the heights, is calling for intellectual honesty at a deeper and a more difficult level. The practice of obedience in this degree supposes the more rigorous honesty that issues in clear-sighted knowledge of one's own motivation.

A necessary distinction

St. Ignatius' concern for honesty is sufficiently attested to by his statement in the "Letter on Obedience" which defines the area of obedience of the judgment as touching matters "where the evidence of the known truth is not coercive." Less obvious is the fact that he is asking us to distinguish between the evidence of the known truth on the one hand, and, on the other, mere opinion based on limited access to facts or knowledge or else judgment rooted in self or colored by our own emotional involvement. In theory we all admit the need of this distinction; in practice we tend to ignore it. Yet

it is clear that not all our opinions and judgments are coextensive with the known truth. Without belaboring the point, we can adduce many instances from everyday life where even highly intelligent and cultivated people lose their sense of objectivity in matters that touch them in a personal way. Whenever a high school principal, for instance, has to take action in regard to boys whose behavior or academic performance is below par, he must reckon with the possibility of flying into storm clouds of maternal ire or paternal indignation. It takes great intellectual honesty on the part of the parent to allow for the justice of the action taken by the principal. In a sense we are all prone to the same emotional attitude toward our own brain children. We need honesty and discernment to distinguish between objective truth and the rationalizations that can come crowding in like mercenaries of lower nature to protect its position of privilege.

It is possible to push the inquiry back a step further and ask: is the superior himself subject to the same pitfall and to what extent the individual religious must defer to the weakness of the superior rather than his own? Any answer must of course emphasize the need for the religious superior to exercise the same discernment about his own objectivity in arriving at his command decision. He, too, must be a man of prayer, attentive to the promptings of grace, on guard against the influence of unworthy motivation or slovenliness in his effort to reach a well-informed, well-considered directive. One may consult the *Constitutions*, IX, to see how St. Ignatius supposes all this in the men appointed as superiors in the Society. Nevertheless, the individual religious has to realize that obedience for him is in the real order where the ideal situation seldom prevails and where perfection on the part of superiors cannot be made the prerequisite for an honest attempt to do one's best on the part of those in the ranks. The problem for the individual religious is that of keeping his commitment fresh and new, cleansed from rapine in the holocaust, free from any unfounded preference for his own views and from the disordered impulses of the unbaptized parts of the ego. He has to keep himself honest even about the fact that intellectual honesty can sometimes be a pose.

Even a casual glance back through the files of the key documents makes it apparent that intellectual honesty is a characteristic trait

in the spirituality of St. Ignatius. In the *Spiritual Exercises* the meditation on the Three Classes of Men is a good example of a consideration in terms of facing the issues honestly. So, too, in the third time for the making of the election, there is a manifest emphasis on the need for objectivity and impartiality of judgment, unweighted by the intrusion of self-love. The same thrust toward stripping oneself of disguise and defenee is to be found in the Ignatian deseription of the aceount of conscienee. It is honest, of eourse, to eall a spade a spade. But how often we find that the spade in our hands turns out to be a hatehet aimed at others, or perhaps a hypodermic needle for the purpose of a hallueinatory trip of our own. Discernment here ealls for the strietest kind of honestly. It is this kind that is assoeiated with obedienee of the judgment.

GOD'S CALL FOR SERVICE

a responsible approach to Jesuit obedience

Thomas J. McGuire, S.J.

There seems to be a growing concern today about a loss of morale in our Society. Many older Jesuits are both confused and antagonized by the drop in vocations and by what seems to them to be a sense of alienation and hostility to authority on the part of their younger confreres. Since this malaise is too widespread to be due to the failings of a few superiors or communities, they attribute it to superficiality and inability to live up to the Jesuit ideal of obedience. Because they themselves understand Jesuit obedience as the core of Ignatian spirituality, as a manly sacrifice of self which has made the Jesuit an effective instrument of the Church, they attribute any difficulties the young have with it to selfishness and to a lack of solid moral courage.

This is, perhaps, a psychologically satisfying way of coping with a confusing phenomenon, but that advantage may be gained at the expense of the Society's future. Unless we can manage to present Ignatian spirituality to the young of today in a way which will appeal to them and to ourselves, our Society will steadily decline in its influence and effectiveness, and the Church will be correspondingly weakened. This paper, therefore, proposes an alternative explanation of the problem and tentatively suggests some lines along which a solution might be developed.

The presupposition on which the paper is based is that the problem is due to misinterpretation or mistranslation. I attribute to this latter term a broader sense than it is usually given. Any set of statements have implicit connections with the culture and times in which they are articulated. If they are literally translated into another culture and another era, they may assume a very different meaning, because of the different context in which they are being understood. To extend the meaning of the old Italian proverb, "*il traduttore è un traditore.*"

Now the Ignatian doctrine of obedience was first articulated in a society, in an intellectual milieu, and in historical conditions very different from those of modern America. Therefore, there is great danger that we mistranslate it and distort its meaning by simply repeating the same patterns of thinking in the very different context in which we live. Perhaps we can go even further and say that in the Society today, the differences in life experience between older and younger generations are so great that the interpretation of obedience put forward by the older group has a very different meaning for the younger. What is being said and what is being heard may be more different than we ordinarily suppose.

Traditional obedience

Perhaps I can concretize this by describing what has been heard by many of my contemporaries. This will involve making explicit the unexpressed connections or implications which the "traditional" interpretation of obedience has for us. I hope that, when this is done, the need for another way of expressing Jesuit obedience will be clear. Let me make it very clear that what I am trying to describe here is the meaning which is conveyed to my generation by the words, the examples, and the ideas which have been used in the past to express Jesuit obedience. It is not necessarily what has been said or intended, but it is what has been heard and what necessarily must be heard within our frame of reference.

In general terms, the interpretation of obedience we have heard places the ultimate moral responsibility for decision and action, not on each individual Jesuit, but on the superior. This can best be explained by considering those cases in which a subject has made representation and is still ordered to follow a course of action he

believes imprudent, though not sinful. (Sin here would be understood in a narrow sense, as some positive act which violates the law of God.)

The interpretation of obedience we have received subsumes these cases under the following logical pattern. All non-sinful commands of legitimate authority must be obeyed. But a religious superior's authority is legitimate because it derives from the pope, and ultimately, from God. And so, the subject can be absolutely sure that he should obey the command of his superior. Coeman's commentary gives a clear example of this line of thinking. "The obedient man," he says, "knows for certain that he is doing the will of God in the pursuit of his own perfection as well as in his work for souls. For the superior is the representative of God and commands with the authority of God, who therefore wills that the superior be obeyed."

The superior's decision is not necessarily correct, or even prudent, but it is best for the inferior to obey it, and best from both a subjective and an objective point of view. From a subjective point of view, obeying the command enables the inferior to deny his own will, and therefore is the most meritorious action he can perform. Objectively, it is best to obey because from this obedience Divine Providence will draw the best overall results.

Critique of the traditional interpretation

Before pointing out the reasons why I and many others object to this interpretation of Jesuit obedience, let me make it clear that I am not implying that any Jesuit has ever held the implications I will try to draw from this interpretation. It is quite possible that in another cultural context this set of formulations would not have had the same implications that it does for us today. Nevertheless, we do live in 20th century America and the implications which this interpretation has for our intellectual milieu must be made clear in order that the interpretation can be rejected as inadequate for our times.

Every element of this interpretation, if I understand it correctly, hinges on the assertion it makes that the subject can be absolutely certain that he should obey a command of his superior, except in matters of sin. If this can be proved, the interpretation is still viable; if not, it must be abandoned.

First, let me approach this claim of certitude directly and point out the objections that can be brought against it. It is widely accepted today that one of the tasks, or, in a sense, the only task which God has given man is to develop himself into a moral adult. This is not a right which a man can voluntarily sacrifice, but an obligation which is inalienable. But if this interpretation of obedience were taken seriously and carried to its logical conclusion, it would reduce a man to a sort of moral infantilism.

I think we can presume that it is better to be certain about what to do than not to be certain. Now obedience, in this interpretation, gives the religious a more certain knowledge of what he should do than any possible unaided use of his own judgment. Concomitantly, if the religious has a certain and detailed knowledge of exactly what God wants him to do in the widest possible areas of his life, he would, by obeying, make a far greater contribution to the apostolate than he could if he were forced to decide for himself what he should do. Therefore, subjects should be clamoring for direction, and superiors should be graciously complying with their requests and giving them commands to govern the smallest details of their lives. I doubt if any Jesuit would ever have accepted such a conclusion and, therefore, perhaps we should no longer be saying that a subject can be "certain" that he should obey his superior.

Over and above the logical consequences of the assertion, if we maintain that the subject is absolutely certain, on the authority of the Church, that it is best for him to obey the command of his superior, we are implicitly claiming for the subject a kind of extended infallibility. We are asserting that all the subject's judgments about what he should do, are, so long as they conform to his superior's commands, protected from error on the authority of God. Besides ignoring the finitude and insecurity of human knowing, this interpretation seems to extend the area of certitude on the authority of God far beyond the narrow limits the Church has set for it.

The conception of providence which is usually associated with this interpretation of obedience stands or falls on the claim that the subject has absolute certitude. Those who put forward this theory of providence do not claim that a superior, whenever he gives a subject an order, is necessarily making the correct decision. They readily admit that the Mystical Body of Christ might have

benefited far more if the subject had been allowed to follow the course of action he himself thought prudent. They strongly maintain, however, that once he has been given a direct command, no matter how imprudent it is, the best thing he can do is to obey it. They say that he can be sure that better results for the apostolate will be produced by obeying and doing what the superior tells him, than by disobeying and doing what he thinks best.

Now there are only three possible ways in which they can maintain such a position. They can, first of all, deny that the external actions, which were previously admitted by them to have certain definite consequences for the salvation of souls, really had such consequences. As a result, obedience would be the only factor producing significant consequences. Secondly, they can argue that God, in some miraculous way, directly intervenes to prevent the consequences of the external actions from occurring. Finally, they can assert that the introduction of obedience adds new consequences to the situation, and these consequences always outweigh the others.

The first position is obviously untenable because it denies that the specific actions men perform make any significant difference to the salvation of souls. If this were true, our priests might just as well dig ditches as administer the sacraments.

The second position reduces to two alternatives. The first is that God rearranges his divine plan every time a religious superior makes an incorrect decision. The other is that superiors are never wrong.

The final position postulates that the subject can be absolutely certain that the factor of obedience introduces new consequences into the situation, that these consequences will always so outweigh the consequences of the external acts, that the balance of benefits will be reversed, and that it will be better to do what the superior commands. This, of course, depends on the presupposition that the subject can obtain absolute certitude about future consequences. If he cannot attain certitude that these consequences will always outweigh the others, then he must use the fallible human judgment God has given him to try to determine what action would contribute most to the service of God.

After making these general criticisms I think we can also say that the notion of authority on which this interpretation of obedience is based is questionable. Authority seems almost reified, as if it were

some quality possessed by God and transmitted by him to the superior. Such a conception seems better suited to a secular feudal society than to the Church. A more properly Christian interpretation might see authority as based on service, as a means to the fulfillment of goals. Its power to oblige the individual would derive from its necessity as a means to these goals. Concretely, the goal of authority in the Society is the salvation of souls. A particular command of a Jesuit superior should, therefore, oblige in conscience precisely to the extent that the subject sees obedience to it as contributing, in the long run, to that end.

In summary, we can say that this "traditional" way of interpreting Jesuit obedience makes the vocation seem, not a generous response to Christ's invitation to join him in doing God's work, but a sort of moral infantilism, a retreat from responsibility. Authority comes to be seen as fundamentally paternalistic, and as an obstacle to the real service of the Church.

A positive formulation

Once we abandon the idea that the subject can ever be absolutely certain that his superior's command is the will of God, another, more practical approach to obedience seems to follow. This approach is in accord with the practical bent of the American mind and has the same basically conservative orientation. Those who take this approach would, in practice, almost always feel obliged to obey a superior, even when he gave an order they thought imprudent. They would differ from past generations of Jesuits, perhaps, in their way of justifying this. It might be explained as follows.

A man joins the Society for apostolic ends, because he believes he can do more for the glory of God within the organization than without it. He knows that authority is required in any organization, natural or supernatural, in order to coordinate the activities of its members, and he realizes that this authority must make final and binding decisions. There will naturally be occasions when he will be ordered to follow a course of action he thinks imprudent. If he disobeys, his action can have consequences on the total efficiency of the Society and could curtail his apostolic service within the Society. Obviously, if everyone disobeyed in such situations, the total effectiveness of the Society would be greatly decreased. An-

other factor which would have to be taken into account would be the human authority of the superior, insofar as the subject had positive evidence that the superior had access to relevant information which was not available to him.

From this point of view, the issue should be decided on practical grounds. If the harm to the Society by disobedience, and thus the foreseeable long range harm to the apostolate, would be greater than the immediate good the subject would accomplish by disobeying, then he should obey. But if he foresaw that greater harm than good would arise from obeying, then he should disobey. Obviously, there is no possibility of certitude in this area, so the subject has to act on the best possible prediction he can form. And just as obviously, the evidence he uses would not be restricted to the public, empirically verifiable data demanded by a rationalistic epistemology. But he must accept the responsibility of using his fallible human intelligence to judge whether it would be better for the glory of God in the long run if he obeyed or disobeyed.

Considerations of personal fulfillment and development can come into this judgment, but only insofar as they are connected with service to the Church. If obeying a particular command would cause a person such harm that his future service to the Church would be gravely endangered, then he might have to disobey.

There is, of course, serious danger of self-deception in this area. These judgments should be made in the spirit of a love of Christ crucified, in order to counterbalance the natural tendency of selfishness to distort the situation. Great prayer would be needed and the issue would have to be of grave moment before it could outweigh the value of maintaining order in the Society. An individual would be rash to disobey if his judgment was not supported by the judgment of experienced and mature fellow Jesuits. Yet even with all these safeguards, some wrong decisions would be made and some individuals would disobey imprudently and use this formulation to justify themselves. Would the Society be defenseless in such cases?

Not at all. No one is saying that a superior should not punish a subject who disobeys in good conscience. On the contrary, he has an obligation to protect the Society and he should have the courage to fulfill it. If he thinks a subject is wrong and doing grave harm

to the Society by disobeying, he might even have to dismiss that subject from the Society. Once we discard the idea that the subject has absolute certitude and admit that his judgment is just as fallible as the superior's, then we must accept the possibility that they can conflict in good conscience.

It should be obvious from this presentation that I am not thinking of disobedience as an everyday event. If the channels of representation are open and superiors are reasonable and courageous men, disobedience would almost never be necessary. The problem is rather with the ultimate moral responsibility of the subject. The expressions of Jesuit obedience which were used in the past no longer make it sufficiently clear that the individual, in obeying a command, is fully responsible for his action, and that he obeys because he believes that his obedience is the best contribution he can make to the apostolate.

My own conviction is that Jesuit obedience is a mature personal response to God's call for service. I hope that this formulation, by making it clear that the unity of the Society is one of the values which must be taken into account in each Jesuit's decisions, will foster a more positive and more responsible attitude toward authority and will increase the practice of obedience. It clearly places the responsibility for maintaining the Society, not on superiors alone, but on the shoulders of each Jesuit. The Society is not just an institution which was created four hundred years ago, but a continuing task which it is now our turn to assume.

NOTES ON AUTHORITY

less traditional significances of the concept

William W. Meissner, S.J.

I

Authority and Leadership

In the sociological literature, there is a great deal of overlap between the respective usages of the concepts of authority and leadership. This undoubtedly reflects the rather complex relationship and interaction between them. My position here is that they are substantially different but closely related notions. Authority, while it embraces a mutual relation between superior and subject, is nonetheless embedded in the formal organization of the group. It is an expression of legitimate power, in terms of which the superior has a legal right to command and the subject has a legal obligation to obey. The concept of leadership, however, is not directly involved in such legalistic overtones. Leadership is a form of the exercise of social power, but it is essentially power that is neither legitimate nor compelling. It is a quality or form of action by which the leader elicits the cooperation of individuals in a common objective and successfully coordinates their activities in achieving the objective.

Thus the respective roles of superior, who is vested with authority, and the leader vis-à-vis the group are distinct, and find their respective bases in different forms of social power. The leader, as

such, can influence the direction of group activity, but he cannot thereby assume authority. The superior, however, may assume the functions of a leader and in many concrete situations is often expected to do so. The basis of authority is *legitimate power*, which is based on the perception by the subordinate that the superior has a legitimate right to direct his behavior. The basis of leadership, however, may be any of the other forms of social power. *Reward power* is based on the subordinate's perception that the leader has the ability to reward his behavior. *Coercive power* is based on the perception that the leader can punish his behavior. *Expert power* is based on the recognition of special knowledge or competence in the leader. And finally, *referent power* is based on the subordinate's identification with the leader. While, reward, coercive, and expert power enjoy a more or less limit field of application, referent power is by far the broadest basis for the exercise of leadership.[1] The identification of the subordinate with the leader or of the member with the group is responsible for most of the cooperative group behavior in human affairs. We will have much more to say about the function of identification in relation to leadership later on.

The literature of sociology and social psychology has spawned studies of leadership with great abandon. The high-powered stimulus of the Second World War with the demand for officer selection and training put a very high premium on the ability to recognize and develop leadership potential. The economic and industrial developments after the war picked up where the wartime efforts had left off and the interest in organizational managerial aspects of leadership provided a focus of continuing research. Unfortunately, the effort expended has not been commensurate with the yield in terms of understanding leadership.

Two varieties

Approaches to the study of leadership tend to cluster into two varieties. Earlier studies tended to favor a trait approach in terms of which the "leader" was regarded as a type of personality who tends to assume a position of dominance within a group in a wide variety of social situations. It became quickly apparent, however,

[1] J. R. P. French, Jr. and B. Raven, "The Bases of Social Power," in *Studies in Social Power*, ed. D. Cartwright (Ann Arbor: Institute for Social Research, 1959), pp. 150-67.

that the same individual was not dominant in different kinds of social interaction. This shifted the emphasis to trying to discover the personality characteristics of the leader in each of different kinds of situations in which leadership behavior was manifested. The limitations of the trait approach led some students of leadership to alter their approach to the study of situational-interactional factors. This approach focused on the interaction among group members rather than on the leader himself. The leader's traits were regarded as merely contributing factors in interaction with other relevant variables, such as group environment, nature of the group task, characteristics of other group members, etc. This made it possible to get around the disturbing fact that the individuals possessing leadership traits were frequently not designated as leaders. Currently the situational-interactional approach is followed almost exclusively.

The concept of leader is not at all simple to designate, nor is there any closed consensus about it. A list of definitions might include:

1) An individual who exercises positive influence on others.
2) An individual who exercises more important positive influence than any other member of the group he is in.
3) An individual who exercises the most influence in goal-setting or goal-achievement of the group.
4) An individual selected by the group as leader.
5) An individual in a given office or position of apparently high influence potential.[2]

The multiplicity of definitions and approaches can be bewildering and frustrating to the social scientist who is inclined to study the phenomenon. The complexity of the factors and their relationships are well displayed in the paradigm proposed by Morris and Seeman.[3] Besides the variety of definitions of the leader and of leader-

[2] R. T. Morris and M. Seemen, "The Problem of Leadership: An Interdisciplinary Approach," *American Journal of Sociology* 56 (1950) 149-55, and C. L. Shartle, "Studies in Naval Leadership," in *Groups, Leadership and Men*, ed. H. Guertzkow (Pittsburgh: Carnegie, 1951) pp. 119-33.

[3] R. T. Morris and M. Seeman, "The Problem of Leadership: An Interdisciplinary Approach," *American Journal of Sociology* 56 (1950) p. 151.

ship behavior, the understanding of leadership embraces a complex interaction between individual factors and factors that are at work within the group. The concept of leadership, therefore, opens up onto a wide range of both psychological and sociological considerations.

Interaction

Elaborating on the interactional concept of leadership, Gibb focuses on several main points which he considers essential to the notion of leadership.[4] First, leadership is always relative to the situation. Not only must the aggregate of individuals be united into a group with common goals by social interaction, but a certain kind of situation is required for the leadership relation to emerge at all. Further, the particular constellation of social circumstances existing at the moment determines which attributes of personality will be required for leadership status and thus also determines which members of the group may be allowed to assume that role. Second, accession of an individual to the role of leader depends on the group goal and the ability or capacity of an individual to contribute to the achievement of that goal. Third, the basic psychology of leadership is that of social interaction. There can be no leader and no leadership without followers. Further, the leadership relation involves a mutual interaction in which the aspirations, ideals, attitudes, and motives of the followers are important determining factors along with the personality, individuality or other leadership potentialities of the leader.

Gibb goes on to an important distinction between leadership and headship. He says:

> When once the group activity has become dominated by an established and accepted organization, leadership tends to disappear. Even if this organization originally served the leadership role, any continuance of the organization as such, after the causal set of circumstances has ceased to exist, represents a transition to a process of domination of headship. . . .[5]

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[4] C. A. Gibb, "The Principles and Traits of Leadership," in *Small Groups: Studies in Social Interaction*, eds. P. Hare, E. F. Borgatta, and R. F. Bales (New York: Knopf, 1955) pp. 87-95.

[5] *Ibid.*

The characteristics which distinguish headship from leadership are then listed:

1) The position of headship is maintained through an organized system and not by the spontaneous recognition of the individual contribution to the group goal.
2) In headship, the group goal is not internally determined.
3) Headship does not really involve a *group* at all, since there is no sense of shared feeling or joint action.
4) A situation of headship involves a wide social gap between the group members and the head, who works to maintain this distance.[6]

This distinction is important insofar as it parallels the distinction between leadership and authority. Authority is analogous to headship, although it is fairly obvious that Gibb's notion of headship is more on the authoritarian side.

It is interesting, however, that Gibb should note in passing that it is not at all necessary that headship should preclude the exercise of leadership. The remark might be confusing, were it not for the fact that the superior in a formally structured organization exercises legitimate authority (headship) within the formal structure. But the group is constituted not only by its formal structure, but by its informal structure as well. On this level, the superior's influence must be in terms of leadership. These distinctions may contribute some clarification to the relations between authority and leadership, but they are too neat. In terms of this distinction, the superior can only influence the group in virtue of his authority on the level of formal structure, and he can only influence the group in virtue of his leadership on the level of informal organization. It is not at all clear that such is the case.

In regard to Gibb's dichotomy, Janda notes that in the leadership-headship dichotomy, for example, that leadership is predicated on the basis of spontaneous recognition in the group, that the group goal is always internally determined in leadership, that leadership never involves a social gap, etc., can easily be challenged and do not hold up to careful examination.[7] It is more realistic, in fact, to

[6] *Ibid.*

[7] K. F. Janda, "Towards an Explication of the Concept Of Leadership in Terms of the Concept of Power," *Human Relations* 13 (1960) 345-63.

recognize that the authority relation is not at all limited to the exercise of influence along rigidly formalistic lines. While authority is defined in terms of legitimate social power, it has a privileged access to other bases of social power. Therefore, its influence has an impact on the group and on individual members of the group in a multiplicity of ways.

It is clear that there is no significant consensus among students of group dynamics on these issues. Thus Janda comments: "Leadership phenomena can be distinguished from other power phenomena when power relationships occur among members of the same group and when these relationships are based on the group members' perceptions that another group member may, with reference to their group activities, legitimately prescribe behavior patterns for them to follow."[8] Here leadership is based on legitimate power. Yet other theorists refer leadership to any power base operative within the group. Bass, for example, holds that "leadership may be viewed as influence occurring among members of the same group."[9] The position being taken here is somewhat more flexible. Authority and leadership are distinct forms of relation, one of which derives from formal group structure and the other does not. But the superior, whether elected or appointed, who exercises legitimate power, is not thereby excluded from the exercise of other forms of power within the group. In fact, his position by reason of authority gives him a more or less privileged position which facilitates his more diversified influence over the group. I have treated in some detail elsewhere some of the dimensions of leadership within the religious group.[10] I was more or less inclined at the time to treat leadership in terms of legitimate power, but there is obviously no inner exigency to limit the term in that fashion.

If we may refer to a leadership function of authority, this may be more useful in calling attention to the diversity of the bases of influence on which the effective exercise of legitimate authority must rest. The group process and the exercise of authority thus are implemented at a dual level. The level of formal structure, at which

[8] *Ibid.*

[9] B. M. Bass, *Leadership, Psychology and Organizational Behavior* (New York: Harper, 1960) p. 94.

[10] W. W. Meissner, S.J., *Group Dynamics in the Religious Life* (Notre Dame Press, 1965).

the exercise of legitimate authority rests on legitimate power, is continually interacting with, determined by, modified and influenced by, the level of informal organization. At this latter level, whatever one may conceive the structure of authority to be in formal terms, the actual functioning of authority is carried out in terms of social interaction, group processes, which operate at both task and emotional levels, and personal motivations, both conscious and unconscious.[11]

The place of leadership

From the point of view of effective exercise of authority, the superior can not afford to prescind from the exercise of his leadership function. The mere communication of an order from the ligitimate superior does not guarantee obedience. The response of the group to a command of legitimate authority, other things being equal, will be more favorable than otherwise. But if other processes are at work within the group acting to disqualify the superior's command or to diminish the forces which motivate members to comply with the command, then obedience to the command will be mitigated to that extent.

As I have already suggested, the basis of power which is most distinctive of leadership and which, as far as I can see, leads it its unique quality, is that of referent power. The concept of referent power rests on the identification of the subordinate with the leader. The implications and overtones of this aspect of the leader-follower relationship are almost inexhaustible. Moreover, it is an aspect of the problem of leadership that has not received the attention it deserves.

Freud had originally related the concept of identification with that of leadership.[12] His ideas, however, were not very clearly thought out and the current of thinking about leadership took a more sociological bent that carried them in a much different direction. One attempt to develop this notion was that of Redl.[13] He referred to "group emotions" as the "instinctual and emotional events taking place within persons under the pressure of group formative

[11] *Ibid.*

[12] S. *Freud, Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego XVIII* (London: Hogarth, 1955) 56-143.

[13] F. Redl, "Group Emotion and Leadership," *Psychiatry* 5 (1942) 573-96.

processes." These can probably better be conceived of as the (largely unconscious) emotional aspects of the group process.[14] He designated the group member around whom the group formative process takes place as the "central person" (leader). The central person can adopt a variety of roles for the basic processes of group formation. This gives rise to a number of types of group formation. It may be of some help to summarize these briefly.

1) "The Patriarchal Sovereign." The relation of members to the central person is based on the members' desire for the central approval. This is a loving relation, which leads to identification with the central person's values.

2) "The Leader." The central person here appeals to the narcissism of the members in the sense that they wish to become like him. Identification here is based on the narcissistic wishes of the members.

3) "The Tyrant." The central person here dominates the group and produces a form of identification based not on love, but on fear—identification with the aggressor. Identification in this instance serves a protective function in the sense that the subject implicitly joins up with the aggressor through identification.

4) "The Central Person as Love Object." The members choose one and the same person as a love object. The central person is here an object of libidinal drives.

5) "The Central Person as Object of Aggressive Drives." The group unites in hostility to a central person.

6) "The Organizer." The central person renders an important service to the members by providing the means for satisfaction of their drives or needs, thus reducing conflict.

7) "The Seducer." The central person renders a service to the members by committing an initiatory act which cuts through guilt feelings, anxieties, and conflicts and permits the open manifestation of latent drives.

8) "The Hero." The central person again resolves the members' conflicts by committing an initiatory act and thus organizing the group action toward a desirable or praiseworthy goal.

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[14] Meissner, *op. cit.*, chapter 2.

9) "The Bad Influence." The central person resolves the members' conflicts over undesirable drives by the influence of his example.

10) "The Good Example." The central person serves a similar function, but in the opposite direction, resolving conflicts in favor of moral behavior rather than in the service of undesirable drives.

While this typology is not very useful in categorical terms, it seems to throw some light on the relation between identification and leadership. With the exception of those relations in which the central person serves as the object of group hostility or group affection (types 4 and 5), the organization of the group in relation to the central person involves some form of identification. In all of these types, the central person is also a leader. He is not performing a leadership function in serving as an object of love or hostility, although it must be admitted these latter instances also represent forms of influence on the group. Leadership is not, therefore, coextensive with influence.

The concept of identification is a complex which has rich implications for psychic structure and functioning. Adequate discussion of it would carry as far beyond the scope of this paper. On a more or less descriptive level, however, it represents a fundamental and primitive way in which people relate to each other. It is essentially unconscious and therefore can be expressed on the level of conscious awareness in a variety of ways. In terms of the leadership relation, it can express itself in terms of admiration, imitation, liking. It can be put in terms of the adoption by the subordinate of the interest, attitude, intention, objectives of the leader. The identification of ego-interest with leader-interest is a major unconscious component of the willingness of the subject to be influenced by the leader. The formula is serviceable even in reference to identification with the aggressor, for even here the threat is allayed by the formation of an alliance. Identification provides the unconscious substratum for cooperative and unified action. Thus the leader is generally accepted by the group insofar as he is perceived as contributing to group goals, because of a prior identification of members with the group and its goals. This raises the further point that identifications need not always be considered as occurring between individuals. They are also a feature of the individual's involvement in the group, and the necessary identification with the leader may be secondary and

derivative from the primary group identification. We can, therefore, raise the further question whether even legitimate authority does not in some sense depend on a prior group identification.

In terms of the bases of social power, referent power based on identification is not only the broadest but also the most advantageous of the forms of social power. Reward power is effective within limits, but it achieves effects only as long as the reward is forthcoming. Coercive power also has limited application and has the added disadvantage that it increases resistance in the group but also tends to mobilize hostility. When the style of supervision is punitive, aggression is directly expressed against the supervisor (at least verbally) and indirectly expressed through diminished production.[15] Expert power is effective, though again limited, and one can reasonably inquire, I think, whether such power is really exercised exclusively of referent or legitimate power.

The relationship between legitimate power and referent power is fairly complex. Translating referent power into terms of positive attitude toward the leader, two major theories have been proposed. A theory based on types of power would predict that the leader's legitimacy results in a positive attitude of the subject to the leader, as contrasted with a more negative attitude which would develop in illegitimate power relations.[16] The second theory, called the power-distance reduction theory, would predict that the smaller the power difference between leader and subject, the more positive would the attitude of the subject be toward the leader.[17] When these theories were tested experimentally, it was found that the power-distance determined the subordinate's attitudes whether the power basis was legitimate or not. However, when the power-distance was large, subjects showed greater resistance to illegitimate than to legitimate power. The power difference would seem, then, to be the more crucial variable, although legitimacy would also seem to have some positive effect.[18]

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[15] R. C. Day and R. L. Hamblen, "Some Effects of Close and Punitive Styles of Supervision," *American Journal of Sociology* 69 (1964) 499-510.

[16] French and Raven, *op. cit.*

[17] M. Mulder, "Power and Satisfaction in Task Oriented Groups," *Acta Psychologica* 16 (1959) 178-225, and "The Power Variable in Communication Experiments," *Human Relations* 13 (1960) 241-57.

[18] M. Mulder, R. Van Diijk, et al., "Illegitimacy of Power and Positiveness

Religious application

Applying this to the religious group, increasing the power distance between subject and superior should decrease the degree of identification. This effect would presumably be mitigated by the superior's legitimacy, which may as we have suggested be mediated through group identification. The balance of the superior's influence rests on the interplay of his legitimate and referent power. The higher a superior in the organizational structure, the greater will be his legitimate power and the less will be his referent power.

It is apparent from these considerations that the effective exercise of the leadership function of authority is very closely related to the internal processes of the group. Implicit in the approach we have adopted here is the suggestion that the influence of the leader over the group and the correlative coordination of goals and purposes between leader and group ultimately rest on relatively unconscious and emotional processes. The effectiveness of the group's task orientation is contingent on the organization of inner emotional workings, and these in turn are reflective of and derivative from often unconscious strata of the individual psyche. The concept of identification is an operative one here, but we have only touched the surface of it. The exercise of leadership in any effective sense, then, requires a basis in the identification of subject with superior and/or of subject with the religious group. It also involves (but does not require) a decrease in the perceived power-distance between subject and superior. The latter consideration is most pertinent at lower levels of the power structure, where legitimate power is less effective and influence depends more on referent power.

If we were to think about the power-structure of the religious group in more or less absolute traditional terms, increasing the effectiveness of leadership becomes a rather limited possibility; it begins quickly to run into built-in mechanisms of resistance. If we shift the basis of our thinking to a more interactional framework and remember that power is not only legitimate and that leadership can be exercised at all levels of the structure—not only by legitimate superiors—the diminution of power-distance and the increase in identification becomes quite feasible. More effective leadership,

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of Attitude Toward the Power Person," *Human Relations* 19 (1966) 21-37.

then, might take the course of a broader distribution of the participation in the leadership function of authority—without any change in the distribution of authority itself.

II

Systems of Social Defense

Authority has been presented in its formal and informal, as well as its structural and functional perspectives. I have tried to suggest in terms of a socio-psychological analysis that traditional models of authority, which were generated in relation to the legitimate yet highly restrictive context of a philosophico-theological problematic of authority, have served as the basis of our pragmatic day-to-day functioning in the authority context. The traditional models, however, emphasize the formal and structural aspects of authority. I have tried to suggest that many of the contemporary problems which focus on authority issues reflect conflicts and ambiguities more specically at the level of the informal and functional aspects of authority.

In this present phase of the consideration of authority, we can turn our attention to an important and functional dimension of the exercise of authority. It should be said at the outset—and the caution is necessary at nearly every step of a consideration of this kind—that the matters under consideration do not directly concern themselves with the formal structure of authority. Questions of the legitimacy of authority, its nature, its locus, its role and function in the organization of social structure are simply not at issue. What is at issue is a set of psychological problems which are involved in and evolve from the practical exercise of authority in the concrete existential order.

The role of anxiety

The role of anxiety is of central importance in the following discussion. I would like, therefore, at the outset to discuss some relevant points about anxiety in more or less general terms before entering into more specific considerations. Anxiety is one of those difficult to define and impossible to agree on concepts which elicit multiple connotations. Consequently the definitions tend to multiply

and the understandings become as diffuse as the contexts and users of the definitions. I will return to some of the more classic usages. In his early approaches to the problem of anxiety, in his *Three Essays on Sexuality* (1905), Freud tended to view anxiety somewhat restrictively as an overflow of libido. His more mature thought on the subject, expressed in the complex and provocative *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety* (1926), produced the concept of anxiety as a signal of impending threat or danger. One could thereby distinguish realistic anxiety from neurotic anxiety. The former was a reaction to external threat, a fear determined by some object or situation in which life was threatened or harm implied. The latter, however, was not proportioned to any external threat; rather it was a response to some form of internal threat.

In dealing with anxiety, one of the fundamental questions to be considered has to do with the character and sources of the inner threat that produce anxiety. Needless to say, the question is exceedingly complex and there is much to be said about it, as well as much that cannot yet be said about it. It can be said, however, that signal anxiety involves a threat to the integrity of the ego. The sources and specifics of that threat can be multiple. The ego is the agency of conscious autonomy and control. Anything, therefore, that threatens the autonomy, security, control, and stability of the ego is perceived as threatening. This is relatively easy to understand in relation to external sources of threat, but it becomes difficult in the consideration of internal sources of threat.

To begin with, the internal sources of threat are not always conscious. Contemporary psychology has demonstrated, if nothing else, that the dimensions of psychic life reach beyond the boundaries of consciousness, that man has a complex life of wishes, needs, drives, and instincts which operate beyond the reach of his conscious mental life. The crucial problems of development and adaptation evolve out of the continuing and constant problem of organizing, integrating and harmonizing the evolving organization of the more or less conscious mental apparatus with the persisting and continuously vital activity of the less organized and dynamic strata of the mind. This creates a concatenation of developmental tasks at every level of the life cycle, from earliest infancy into advanced old age.

The fact that the vital stratum persists at an unconscious level affects every aspect of human life and activity. There is no room here to elaborate a total psychology of this aspect of man's inner life. I only wish to point out that its existence makes the understanding of anxiety more complex. For it is in this aspect of psychic functioning that anxiety often finds its source. Anxiety can accompany the unleashing of libidinal drives, of aggressive impulses, of forbidden or proscribed impulses of all kinds. Such impulses can be disturbing when they are conscious; they can also be disturbing when they are unconscious. They produce anxiety, as a rule, when consciously or unconsciously they pose a threat to the integrity of the ego.

Diminution of self-value

I will focus on only one aspect of the threat which I think can serve as a basis for our further analysis. One of the significant elements of threat to the ego is the destruction of self-esteem or the diminution of self-value. The disruption of libido produces anxiety because the associated wishes are inconsistent with the self-image the ego maintains and which is essential to its psychological survival. Such impulses are therefore threatening. Similarly, the arousal of aggressive and hostile impulses can be threatening insofar as they violate the maintained self-image. Without going into the basis of the self-image and its genesis, the self-image is teleologically calculated to support and maintain self-esteem and self-valuation. It is an essential component of normal adaptation and mature psychological functioning. It is as essential psychologically as oxygen is physiologically. There is no substitute for it. When it is threatened or in danger, human beings instinctively defend it and struggle to preserve it. When it is damaged, men suffer the agonies of masochism, depression, guilt and suicide.

An important aspect, then, of this state of affairs is that the occurrence of anxiety requires a certain degree of ego development and a matured self-image. The more evolved one's sense of personal self-esteem and the more matured the sense of personal value, the more vulnerable is the person to anxiety. This is, of course, if taken without proper qualification, not an altogether defensible statement. But within limits it has a degree of applicability. There are obviously other factors which influence the occurrence and intensity of

anxiety. The more realistic the self-image, for example, the more flexible can the ego be in the face of the threat of impulse—and consequently the less threatening is the impulse. The point to be stressed is that perfectly normal and well adjusted people are subject to anxiety. Anxiety is part of human existence, because it is the common lot to have impulses, conscious and unconscious, which threaten the intrinsic sense of value linked with every man's personal self-image.

The threat to self-image and its concomitant sense of personal value is in fact a far-ranging and significant aspect of human motivation. It is of extreme interest psychologically to explore the roots of this very general and all too little appreciated aspect of the mental life. But I will content myself here with merely stating the fact. We may return to it in further considerations, but for the moment the focus of our concern is on the broader interactional issues which derive from it.

Anxiety and authority

A basic psychological fact about authority is that for most, if not all, men it constitutes an area of conflict and anxiety. The reasons behind this phenomenon are multiple, and can hardly be exhausted. I would like to separate the exercise of authority from the reaction or response to authority. Both aspects have their conflictual and anxious elements. It is perhaps easier to grasp the element of conflict in the response to authority. The psychological relationship which is inherent in the response to authority on the part of the members of a community or organization recalls and reactivates attitudes and dispositions to authority which reach back through the life history to the earliest and most primitive such relationships. The issues that are implicitly raised, therefore, in the response to authority are issues of dependence, submission, and obedience. These issues and their correlative postures are characteristic of and perhaps caricatured by infantile relationships. The child is pre-eminently dependent, submissive, and obedient. But his dependence is adulterated by ever increasing impulses to progressive independence from parental control and limitation. His submission is increasingly modified by the innuendoes of revolt from parental demands. His obedience is continually and increasingly tempered by resentment and resistance.

There is no question that along the course of the individual's developmental history there is an accretion of such formative influences. Further the residues of such influences remain operative, but they remain operative in a manner quite removed from the conscious intent of the person responding to authority in the contemporary moment. The residues of prior experiences remain active in an unconscious manner so that the individual finds himself responding with emotions and attitudes which do not fit the reality of the immediate situation or relationship. The total response to authority in the present situation is colored and modulated by the activation of parallel unconscious fantasies which derive from earlier and primitive levels of experience rather than from the present context. As a result, the response to authority may incorporate emotional and attitudinal overtones which may derive from unconscious fantasies. Thus the conflictual aspects of the authority relationship which derive from more infantile and primitive levels of the psychic organization can become active in determining in part a present response.

It is, of course, obvious that conflicts over authority are not only unconscious. But the key issue is whether such conscious conflicts do not imply and reflect less conscious conflictual aspects of the total psychic response. A convincing case can be made that such is in fact the reality. While we are often taken up by the conscious aspects of conflicts with authority figures, with the apparent motives and arguments, we so often remain sublimely unaware, i.e., unconscious, of the basic motivational elements. Proof is always difficult to come by, but on clinical grounds evidence can be mustered to support the position that such basic conflicts are the fundamental human lot. We all fall heir to them, since we are all victims of the infantile experience of restriction and submission to the overpowering significant figures (parents) in our most primitive experiences.

The point that I wish to make is that the activation of such primitive and infantile conflicts and their attendant emotions is associated with the arousal of anxiety. Anxiety is a derivation of the arousal of infantile residues which carry within them an inherent threat to the integrity of the ego. The unconscious conflictual fantasies aroused in the authority relation embody very basic and instinct-dependent forces whose activation constitutes a danger to

the integrity and control of more organized aspects of the mental apparatus. It is important, therefore, to try to bring into focus the basic concept that anxiety is built into the authority relation, not by reason of its formal structure but by reason of its informal process.

But, thus far, we have only considered the roots of anxiety in the response to authority. What about its exercise? We must maintain that here too authority carries within it an inherent anxiety. It is sometimes difficult to appreciate, but the fact remains that those who exercise authority share similar conflicts regarding authority as those who must respond to it. It should also be remembered that the number of those who exercise authority and are not required at the same time to respond to it is indeed small.

Responsibility

But we can go further. The exercise of authority implies and imposes responsibility. The superior accepts and strives to fulfill that responsibility. Psychologically speaking, his acceptance of the role of superior carries with it the implicit role expectation that he act and function as the responsible one. He achieves a sense of his own identity as embodying the ideal of responsibility. His self-esteem and sense of value are tied up with his idealized self-image as "the responsible one." The catch is that, like all human beings, the one who exercises authority, the responsible one, is also subject to irresponsible impulses. These irresponsible impulses reflect the activity of the less organized and dynamic levels of his personality. Such impulsivity is inconsistent with the demands of his self-image. They contradict and erode the image of the responsible one. They therefore constitute a threat to the integrity of his self-image. And this threat becomes manifest as anxiety. The basic insight in this approach is that the human lot is under constant subjection to the influence of impulsive, ill-controlled, disruptive and threatening stimuli, which are by and large unconscious and serve to elicit anxiety. The purest heart carries within it the barbs of impure impulses and wishes that disturb its equilibrium and cause it to feel the sting of anxiety. The gentlest soul has within it the fire of anger and hostility that surges within it and produces the searing pain of anxiety. And so too, the most reliable and responsible of men has within him the ever active source of impulses and wishes to irrespon-

sible action which poses for him the threat of anxiety. Characteristically, the impulses—libidinal, aggressive, irresponsible, or whatever—are not felt as such, do not reach consciousness in their true colors. They are masked and distorted beyond recognition, but they leave their telltale mark in anxiety.

Social defense mechanisms

Common knowledge in our age of psychological sophistication gives credence to the role of man's psychological defenses in allaying anxiety. The defense mechanisms as commonly conceived are erected and utilized by the individual psyche to ward off the threat implicit in anxiety and to modulate and modify the pain associated with such a threat. Such mechanisms are intrapsychic; they come to life in the individual psyche and serve to maintain the psychic functioning of each individual, exclusive of his interaction with his fellows.

At another level of analysis, however, on the level of social interaction and transaction within a group, it is possible to consider other defense mechanisms which also serve the ends of alleviating anxiety. Particularly where the anxiety flows from the structure and characteristics of the group, individual intrapsychic mechanisms have a limited utility. The members of the group have a need to use the organization in their struggle against anxiety. Psychologically, individual members of the group externalize their characteristic defense mechanisms and there arises within the group a collusive interlocking of defensive postures which constitutes a massive socially structured defense system.

To focus our analysis more specifically on authority, we can begin with the postulate that the group is composed of individuals who carry within them the basic conflicts about authority which we have already discussed. Each individual carries within him the roots of a conflict which revolves around the generation of irresponsible impulses. The conflict arouses anxiety and puts into operation defensive functions which are aimed at preserving the integrity and adaptation of the ego. The mechanisms are largely unconscious and take the following form. The first step consists in the denial of the conflict itself and of the associated anxiety. The ego uses denial in a purely repressive fashion in this first step. The conflict and the threat of its associated anxiety are simply denied and deprived of

admission to the consciousness. The mechanism is totally unconscious, and operates at a fairly primitive level. The ego cannot tolerate any conscious recognition of the existence and operation of such a detrimental conflict. Nor can it deal effectively in any way with the threat of anxious disruption which attends the existence of such a conflict. Consequently, the conflict and anxiety are almost automatically masked out, blotted out and repressed from consciousness.

The second step in this defensive movement is the splitting or separation of the two aspects of the conflict. Responsibility and irresponsibility are divided and isolated from each other. Thus the two elements which are mutually involved with each other in conflictual opposition can be dealt with in isolation without any regard to the inherent conflict. The third step involves the projection of the repressed and isolated elements outside of the psyche to objects in the environment. This last step, also largely unconscious, completes the essential steps of the process. Thus the basic conflict and the associated experience of anxiety are driven out of consciousness by repression and denial and become unconscious. Thus the sting is withdrawn. Next, the denied conflictual elements are separated from each other and regarded in isolation, i.e., without conflict. And finally the denied and divorced elements are separately projected to disparate portions of the social system outside of the individual, and can be dealt with separately.

Projection

The first two steps, denial and splitting, set the stage for and make possible the third step of projection. It is through projection that the socially structured defensive system arises. The projection works in the following way. The individual member of the group or organization projects his own feelings of responsibility to authority figures above him in the structure of the group. At the same time he also projects the separated feelings of irresponsibility to his subordinates in the social system. Since his responsible attitudes are really reactions against his irresponsible impulses, the more unruly the impulses to irresponsibility, the more harsh, restrictive and demanding must his responsible attitudes become. Consequently, the more intense and persistent his own unconscious impulses to irresponsibility, the more restrictive and punitive does his

responsible self become. The projection of these separated and basically conflictual elements results in a perception of superiors as harsh, repressive, demanding and punitive and in the perception of inferiors as carefree, impulsive, lacking in any sense of responsibility, and unable to be trusted with any commission or responsibility of consequence.

The result of this unconscious set of operations within the social system is or can be rather far reaching, both for the individuals involved and for the operation of the social system. The point should be made that the mechanisms proposed here are general and widely operative human mechanisms for dealing with the disturbing effects of conflict and anxiety. The basic economic principle involved is that it is easier and more tolerable to deal with conflict projected into the interpersonal realm than to deal with it on the intrapsychic level. Conflict between individuals is undoubtedly painful, but it is less painful than the internal conflict, anxiety and erosion of self-esteem that overwhelm the ego's defenses in the intrapsychic arena. The projection of repressive and strict attitudes to superiors creates difficulties in the interpersonal adjustment to superiors. But it also makes it possible to objectify and identify this aspect of the authority conflict and deal with it as though it were an external conflict. The superior can be blamed and struggled against in the external order and thus one aspect of the underlying conflict can be dealt with and the anxiety in part alleviated. Similarly, projection of irresponsible impulses to inferiors permits one to deal with the second member of the underlying conflict and further modify anxiety. Anxiety, then, is alleviated, but it is alleviated at the price of distrust, hostility, external conflict, and disorganization and disruption, not in the individual, but in the social system. The externalization, as it were, of the individual's characteristic defenses and their projection to the social system is intrapsychically adaptive, but it is disruptive on the level of social interaction.

Modified authority

The result of this way of handling conflicts of authority is that at all levels of the social organization individuals perceive those above them as harsh, repressive, demanding, and imposing unnecessarily strict discipline. Conversely, at all levels individuals perceive those

below them in the social organization, their inferiors, as wanting in responsibility, careless, untrustworthy, etc. The result is that there is an unconscious but collusive redistribution of responsibility and irresponsibility within the social system. Responsibility is ascribed to certain roles and irresponsibility is ascribed to certain other roles. In consequence, the functional exercise of authority is modified. Responsibility at lower levels of the organization is diminished and responsibility at the upper levels of organization is increased. The tendency is reinforced by the perception of superiors that they are more responsible and that their inferiors are less than responsible. It is also confirmed by the tendency of inferiors to believe that they are indeed incapable of responsibility and that their superiors are excessively endowed with that esteemed virtue. The whole is elaborated and evolves out of a collusive and interlocking system of denials, splittings, and projections which reconstruct, the organization of functional authority in the social system. It redefines the task and role expectations at all levels of the system, and it does so in complete isolation from the formal organization of the system. The driving force is the internal conflicts over authority and responsibility which give rise to anxiety.

The further complication of this system is that, as a rule, people tend to act as others perceive them. People act objectively according to the psychic roles assigned them by others. And thus, the projective system, unconsciously derived as it is, begins to take on the cast of reality. Inferiors become, in fact, less responsible than their position and capabilities would dictate. Responsible tasks are forced upwards in the hierarchy of authority so that responsibility for their performance can be disclaimed at lower levels. Responsibility must therefore be assumed by (more responsible) individuals at higher levels, and the perception of those at lower levels as irresponsible is thereby substantiated. The impact of responsibility is diminished by a subtle form of delegation to superiors. The result, of course, is that superiors exercise too much authortiy and inferiors share less and less in the responsible action of the group.

A social system

The process which we are discussing depends on very basic and general human reactions and mechanisms. The arousal of anxiety in the authority relationship is a fundamental human experience,

and it is through the mobilization of universally operative defensive mechanisms of denial, splitting and projection that the socially structured defense system comes into being. The mechanisms can operate in any social structure in which authority functions.

I would like to turn attention to a specific social system which has been carefully studied and in which many of these mechanisms have been identified and their influence on the group and its functions traced. The study was made of the nursing service of a general teaching hospital in Great Britain.[19] It was conducted to help resolve a crisis that had arisen between the demands of patient care and the teaching obligations of the nursing service. The level of anxiety and stress generated in this system was reflected by dissatisfaction, high absentee rate, high rate of illness among the nurses, and a very high dropout rate. The latter was particularly distressing, since fully a third of the nurses initiating their training did not finish and with rare exceptions the dropouts were those women who were most highly regarded as potential nursing candidates.

The study of this social system revealed that it constituted a highly organized and tightly authoritarian system. At the bottom of the pile were the student nurses in their first year. They were responsible to and took orders from all other nurses. The other nurses were part of a pecking-order which was determined by years in training or service. Second year nurses were responsible to third year nurses, etc. In this tightly structured system, the stress and anxiety were handled by a variety of social defense mechanisms which we can list as follows:

1) Depersonalization, categorization and denial of the significance of the individual. This was achieved by the use of task-lists, by which each nurse was assigned to perform a certain task for many patients, by the employment of an ethic of equivalence according to which it must not make any difference to the nurse whom or what she nursed, and by the wearing of a uniform which became the symbol of expected inner and behavioral uniformity such that the nurse was regarded as an aggregate of nursing skills rather than as an individual. This depersonalization was reinforced by frequent

[19] I. E. P. Menzies, "A Case Study in the Functioning of Social Systems as a Defence Against Anxiety: A Report on a Study of a Nursing Service of a General Hospital," *Human Relations* 13 (1960) 95-121.

shifts of the nurses from one service to another with an attendant increase in stress and emotional disruption associated with the disruption of interpersonal relationships among members of the nursing staff. The system thereby refused to recognize the importance of warm interpersonal relationships as an aspect of the nurses' work adjustment.

2) Detachment and denial of feelings. There was taught and inculcated an implicit requirement for professional detachment, control of feelings and the avoidance of any disturbing identifications. The good nurse remained unattached ('detached'), did not mind moving from ward to ward at a moment's notice. This was reinforced by a variety of interpersonal repressive techniques ('stiff upper lip') which underscored feelings as professionally unacceptable. The students felt this as evidence that they were not understood by the members of the staff directing them. But this seems not to have been the case. The nursing supervisors recognized the problem and understood it, but sympathetic handling of emotional stress was regarded as inconsistent with traditional nursing roles and relationships.

3) Idealization of nursing candidates and denial of possibilities for personal development. Because of the nature of nursing tasks and the anxiety associated with their performance, the nursing service constantly seeks assurance that the candidates it is accepting are mature and responsible people. There is a consequent idealization of the nursing candidate who is presumed to be mature and competent. The further consequence of this presumption is that the training program focuses on training in the facts and techniques of nursing and pays minimal attention to the needs of nursing students for personal growth and the needs of all nursing students to grow in a sense of personal maturity and identification in a professional role.

4) Social redistribution of responsibility and irresponsibility. By the mechanisms previously discussed juniors are regarded as irresponsible and seniors are regarded as excessively strict and repressive in discipline. Decisions are avoided at lower levels of the hierarchy. This is accomplished by excessive ritualization and standardization of nursing procedures. As a consequence, however, responsible tasks are forced upwards in the hierarchy and the

general effect is that nurses at all levels are performing tasks which are below their level of ability and also below the level of their position. Another consequence is that all initiative and exercise of discretion are discouraged and avoided. It is not surprising, therefore, that the more gifted students should find this situation intolerable and would drop out.

5) Avoidance of change. Any significant social change implies an alteration in the social system as a defensive system. Change therefore implies an exacerbation of anxiety and at least a transient weakening of the defenses against it. The greater the anxiety in the system, the greater is the need for reassurance and reinforcement of the existing social defense system. The adherence to the existing system can take on the aspect of rigidly compulsive adherence to the demands of the system and a inability to tolerate any change. Efforts to introduce change are resisted by conscious and unconscious means.

The steps in the evolution of this defense system were arousal of anxiety, mobilization of defenses to allay anxiety, and finally the institutionalization or organization of individual defenses by unconscious collusive interaction into a rigidly functioning social defensive system. This serves the purposes of reducing anxiety, but I think that it quickly becomes apparent that the prize is won at a tremendous cost, since it creates other stresses which tell on the participating members. It compels individuals to fit the demands of the system without any recognition or provision for the normal human needs for warm, emotionally stable relationships, for the demands of self-esteem, for responsibility and the exercise of initiative and judgment. It moves the conflict into the social area where it can be less threatening and more easily dealt with, but in so doing it creates a rigid and repressive social system. The price is the rather high price of dehumanization and depersonalization.

Implications for religious communities

The present analysis is calculated to illumine some of the informal aspects of implementation of authority in social structures. The religious community is such a structure, and it is a structure in which authority plays a primary role.[20] It is not overly bold to assume that religious are human beings and that they share with

[20] Meissner, *op. cit.*

other human beings conflicts over authority. It seems safe, therefore, to assume that if we look carefully we shall find many of the elements of such social defense systems operative in religious communities. Generalizations, however, are difficult, because so much depends on the existential factors and on the level of maturity inhering in any given community. We can also presume on good psychological grounds that where individual and group maturity is high, anxiety is minimal and social defense mechanisms play a minor role in the group process.

It may be worthwhile, even so, to reflect on some characteristic postures of the religious group to find out whether they may not reflect the operation of defensive systems. I will follow the previously indicated points. The denial of the significance of the individual has been a cardinal point in the spirituality of religious groups and is still often proposed as a sort of ideal. The place where this emphasis is most clearly made is in relation to obedience. The good religious is ready to do whatever is asked of him, wherever and whenever. This implies that one religious is as good (or as bad) for the performance of a given task as any other. There is no question that an extreme adherence to this posture is less and less seen currently, but one is sometimes prompted to wonder whether it does not cling to life as a kind of agrarian ideal, whimsically clutched but enjoying little realistic application. The other side of this posture, which used to be ignored but is becoming more and more of an issue, is that it required depersonalization and a degrading of the person. One could perhaps justify such a posture in terms of sacrifice to the common good in some fairly primitive contexts, but the modern context more and more often requires judgment, initiative, and responsibility in members of religious communities in order to accomplish the purposes of the community. This means that not only the individual must pay a price, but also the community. It is difficult on such terms to justify the posture.

Religious groups have a curious cult about feelings. They are suspicious and undesirable. Detachment and control (denial?) of feelings is so much more virtuous. One often senses an avoidance or denial of feelings, as if everyone was agreed that they didn't belong somehow and collusively to avoid them. Avoidance of feelings is often inculcated both intrapsychically and in the context of interpersonal relationships.

A striking parallel to the nursing system is the idealization of candidates that is often seen in religious groups. Selection of candidates, tests, interviews, and other screening devices are employed to assure the religious group of the best available candidates. One can raise the question whether the consequence does not also involve a presumption of maturity. There is no question that religious groups are embarrassingly impoverished when it comes to provision for the handling of developmental emotional problems in its members. This has particular application to formative years in which young adolescents are received as candidates and then subjected to spiritual formation over a period of years. Unfortunately the emphasis is all too frequently on subjection to institutionalized patterns of behavior, including the matter of prayer, rather than on developmental and emotional problems and their proper working-through. I maintain the importance of the former, but I must also insist on the importance of the latter. The extant provisions for such problems are generally discouraging, if not nonexistent. Those who appeal to the institution of spiritual fathers as adequate for these needs point directly to the existing inadequacy.

Responsibility and irresponsibility

By far the most serious and far-reaching implication for the religious community is the redistribution of responsibility and irresponsibility. Over the long haul of life in religion, this aspect of the defensive system can have a continuing and far-reaching attrition. The toll is taken by forcing the individual religious into an overly submissive and irresponsible position in which through an appeal to "obedience" he avoids responsible action and mature judgment. He too easily can resign his responsibility to his superior, and then, embittered by this situation blame the superior for this state of affairs. This is all too easy since the superior is already perceived as repressive and demanding. There are a good many delicate issues that can be explored here, but they lie beyond our present scope. It can be said, however, that the avoidance of responsibility, however it comes about, is an immaturity. True obedience does not tolerate the avoidance of responsibility. Disobedience is of two kinds. One can disobey by deviance and rebellion. One can also disobey by submission and passivity. The latter form of disobedience is too often not recognized as such.

A further effect of this redistribution is the slow, gradual, almost imperceptible erosion of the individual's sense of personal value and self-esteem. This effect is also contributed to by mechanisms for depersonalization. The result is a form of self-depreciation which produces indifference, depression, an unwillingness to exercise iniative or imagination, a lack of spontaneity and an inability to function effectively and efficiently. We forget, as I have already suggested, that self-esteem is necessary for any kind of responsible and successful activity. If the system erodes self-esteem, it also erodes the capacity for productive and creative activity, whether it be in teaching or preaching, or learning or whatever. One often hears the complaint over the apparently large numbers of religious who become unproductive and lead their religious lives without active involvement with others whom they contact. If the present analysis has any merit, it at least raises the question whether in such a circumstance we are not witnessing the attrition of a social defense system.

A final point is the matter of resistance to change. I think that little need be said on the matter here. It is easy to say that religious groups are resistant to change and to adopting a critical attitude, as many do. But there are unanswered questions as to what change really is and how much change is appropriate for the religious group. I have suggested elsewhere that change and adaptation are necessary for the survival of the religious group.[21] Change must be measured by a relative measure. That change is good which improves the effectiveness of the religious group in its common objectives and purposes. Resistance to change is therefore a matter of degree. Religious groups are changing, but the question can still be asked whether the change is enough, or fast enough. It is also true that there is resistance to change in religious groups. Where there is resistance, we can honestly ask ourselves whether it is derived from the operation of unconscious motivations and reflects the compulsive rigidity of a socially organized defensive system.

As a concluding comment, I would like to add that the present analysis is directed toward a particular aspect of the authority relation. Whether it is operative in a given community or to what extent it is operative can only be judged by evaluating the observable

[21] *Ibid.*

effects produced by such a system. It may have an overwhelming influence on the life of a community, or it may have a minimal effect. It is, however, I would think, always identifiable. If it does loom large enough to present a problem, what does one do about it? The question is a sort of automatic response of concerned religious. Solutions are hard to come by and I will avoid giving one. It can be said, however, that dissolution of the defensive system requires the willingness and capacity of those involved to tolerate the inner anxiety which originally motivated the generation of the system to begin with. The capacity to tolerate such anxiety and conflict is one measure of individual and group maturity.

REPORT

FREEDOM-AUTHORITY-OBEDIENCE

Edited by Richard A. Blake, S.J.

In early January of 1966, Father Provincial John J. McGinty asked Fr. Donald Campion to consult with some members of the New York Province and then to draft a paper on freedom-authority-obedience for presentation at a meeting of the rectors of the Province at Cold Spring Harbor, January 17–19. As a result of their discussion on this paper, the rectors requested that Father Provincial commission a group to make a further study of the questions raised. The Committee given this task by Father Provincial in February included Frs. Thomas E. Clarke, W. Norris Clarke, John W. Donohue, James W. Gaffney, Robert O. Johann, George C. McCauley, George J. McMahon, John J. McMahon, Martin F. Mahoney, and Matthew J. O'Connell, with Fr. Campion serving as chairman.

The Committee members subsequently met on occasion in small groups and exchanged ideas through written memoranda. At a meeting in mid-April, a decision was made to expand the basis of discussion by distributing a set of three provisional papers drafted by Frs. Johann, O'Connell, and J. McMahon. Every house in the Province then held at least one community discussion on the papers and related questions. The Committee received written reports on these meetings for its guidance. A number of individuals, including members of the Committee itself, also submitted written comments or criticisms. In June, the Committee reviewed all these materials and decided to have its chairman draw up a comprehensive report to the Province on the results of this ongoing community dialogue. In the compilation of this report, which takes the form of a chronological record rather than an attempt at a final synthesis, Fr. Donald J. Hinfey rendered invaluable assistance.

The present condition of life in the Church is characterized by great concern for the relationship between individual Christian freedom and the exercise of authority. This broad problem comes to sharpest focus in religious life, since obedience to authority is there offered through a vow, which, though freely pronounced, seems to limit an individual's Christian freedom to a striking degree. As a consequence, the problem is more urgent for religious. Even though the atmosphere of uneasiness which presently pervades many areas of religious life may incline some to sweep the issue under the rug or to look the other way, it is one that must be faced with courage. No one is sure how this question will be resolved, but no one is exempt from the task of trying to resolve it.

THE PROBLEM AND ITS CONTEXT

In his paper for the Rectors' Meeting, Fr. Campion pointed out that Vatican II has made a reconsideration of Jesuit obedience imperative, not indeed because it has been abrogated by the Holy Spirit, but because its roots in theology, philosophy, history, and sociology must be seen more clearly today. He then set down some guidelines for this reconsideration which he drew from the Council documents. We are obliged, he noted, to ponder the Council's call to return to the Gospel for light on appropriate renewal and adaptation of every aspect of religious life. Further, we must take account of the dignity of the human person as understood by the conciliar Fathers, as well as their emphasis on the freedom of the Spirit in dealing with all men. Above all, it becomes necessary to examine what all this means in terms of the Christian attitude which ought to characterize relations between superiors who are servants and those who are members of their communities.

Fr. Campion identified two essentials without which the questions raised for today's religious cannot be adequately answered: *dialogue* and *vocation:*

> If dialogue is to be a true characteristic of the exercise of authority and a corresponding response of obedience, certain conditions or presuppositions must exist. Both sides to the dialogue must be committed wholeheartedly and intelligently to ideals of the community. Both must be willing to admit at least the possibility of being wrong. Both sides must be prepared to lay their cards on the table, to enter into candid discussion and to be willing to trust each other with the facts. In all this, it is clear, one is saying that both superior and subject must treat each other as an adult, as a man of good will and one sincerely seeking to follow God's will as his informed conscience dictates. All of this, since we are talking of a dialogue between Christians and religious, is to take place in a setting to which the superior brings a desire to serve

rather than to be served, and the subject brings humility and a fundamental desire to move from self-centeredness to altruism.

Why the stress on dialogue and on awareness of the nature and existence of charisms in the Church? One's reason could be little more than a desire to communicate with men of today's Church and world where such ideas are prevalent. More positively, one could emphasize them out of conviction that to do so is the will of God manifested to us by the Church in Council and that to do so is, humanly speaking, the more effective way of governing in a community of men. To round out that picture, it must be remembered, as Fr. Karl Rahner remarks, that, despite the way some people talk, the Holy Spirit is free to give charisms *even* to those who hold office in the institutional or hierarchical Church!

My commitment to a life under authority in a religious community cannot be described as the signing of a blank check. Yet it is a commitment to a particular way or style of life in the Church, one made out of conviction that this is the will of the Spirit for me. I make this commitment, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, because the Church certifies that ordinarily and more surely the Spirit will henceforth speak to me in and through this group. Religious obedience, then, is not just the carrying out of this or that command, or these regulations. It is a commitment to a style of life that differentiates me from all other Christians.

In answering the question why this "style of life" involves obeying men, Fr. Campion pointed out:

The most fundamental consideration seems to be one that lies at the heart of the notion of a vocation to religious life in the Church. It is fundamental because it goes to the roots of our understanding of the whole meaning of the Church itself. As the opening paragraph of the second chapter in the *Constitution on the Church (Lumen Gentium)* puts it: "It has pleased God . . . to make men holy and save them not merely as individuals, without mutual bond; but rather has it pleased Him to make of them a People that acknowledges Him in truth and serves Him in holiness" (No. 9). More specifically with respect to the function of authority and obedience within a group thus "called" by God, we have the testimony of the New Testament (and some Scripture scholars see similar evidence in the Old) that it has pleased God precisely to have men saved through other men and that our following of Christ or of God's will is by his design normally to be a *mediated* following.

What all this boils down to may be stated simply enough: in religious life, both superior and subject have grave obligations to remain open to the movements of the Holy Spirit. For the superior this means, among other things, being particularly attentive to the Spirit speaking through members of the community—hence the importance of *dialogue*. For the subject this means, among other things, being aware that the Spirit has spoken through one's vocation to a particular way of life and that henceforth genuine movements of the Spirit for him will be in accord with that way or style. In other words, the subject must understand that so long as the group or community itself

remains approved in the Church, the presumption must be that an authentic impulse of the Spirit will be for him a summons "*secundum ejusdem societatis constitutiones*"—hence the importance of *vocation.*

Sacramental and traditional views

Early in the labors of the Province Committee, Fr. Thomas Clarke indicated some points for fruitful reflection and discussion when he called attention to the sacramental and mystical quality of law and authority: "They announce a special, self-communicating presence of God to his people and the response of the people." He wrote, too, that while the superior is in place of God, he also is in place of the community whose voice and expression he ought to be.

Fr. T. Clarke also remarked that law has effects on the intellect as well as on the will, because the mind is illumined by it to know God's ways. In connection with this, the reality of sin and its effects in our world perhaps heightens the need man has for "external" guidance, for light from without. Yet, authority must listen to, and not still, the prophet's voice, since one can only judge others legitimately if one is willing to submit to judgement.

Others of the Committee in this early phase had explored matters more immediately in the light of "traditional" Jesuit formulations on authority and obedience. The minutes, recorded by Fr. John W. Donohue, from a meeting of one small group in March contained the following:

It was agreed that some of the difficulties some members of the Society have with the ideals of obedience and authority are due, in part, to the bad effects of an outmoded rhetoric. It is quite possible, for instance, that Fr. Campion's concept of "dialogue" is substantially what the *Constitutions* advance, at least germinally, in their concept of "consultation." The danger is that certain superiors, themselves misled by the imperfectly understood rhetoric of the 16th century, may fulfill their role in such a fashion as to reinforce the difficulties young people feel. . . .

It was pointed out that a paper by Fr. Hugo Rahner . . . contains an effective presentation of what might be called the "classical Jesuit concept" of obedience. Fr. Rahner argues that the obedience is to Christ but is secured by means of the pope and, through the pope, by means of the superiors who mediate the pope's will. . . . Fr. Rahner concludes, in what is the heart of the matter, that the obedience to Christ crucified is just as fully achieved when it is an "obedience to an order which is in no way sinful but which may be foolish and irrational."

If there is indeed a theoretical "crisis" of obedience today (as distinguished from a purely practical one which may be caused chiefly by the defects of superiors or subjects or both), it was agreed that it is located precisely here. Today, the realm of conscience and the ideals of freedom and personal re-

sponsibility have so expanded that, for many, the acceptable concepts of obedience, consultation, representation and so on, have also changed. It seems that many people today feel that they are morally obliged *not* to follow an order which is "foolish and irrational." Responsible persons, they feel, are not free to follow foolish commands. . . . Surely Jesuits have always understood that their obedience must be rational. For older generations, however, this rational element was sufficiently safeguarded, in face of an order which appeared foolish, or at least less wise, by the conviction for which Fr. Rahner argues, *viz.*, that the ideal of obedience to Christ is secured as well, perhaps better, by obeying the less wise command of a superior who is the mediating vessel of Christ's will as by obeying a command which is clearly prudent. Some younger Jesuits are said to feel, though, that this is not enough to safeguard the rational character of the human act of obedience. They think it is unreasonable for them to obey orders which are pointless, and unreasonable for administrators to urge such orders.

ANALYTIC MOMENT: CLARIFICATION AND FORMULATION

A major stimulus to further reflection and discussion in the Province on freedom-authority-obedience came from an essay by Fr. Robert O. Johann in which he stressed that the notion of authority must be understood, not univocally, but analogously, with varying application depending on the nature of the community involved. Under the title "Authority and Fellowship," he wrote:

If the debate in religious circles about the conflicting claims of freedom and authority has not always been fruitful, the reason lies, I think, in the limited and univocal concept of authority too often adopted by both sides. It has been assumed without question that authority can be defined in abstraction from the sort of community in which it operates.

Authority and community do, of course, go together. Community is something intentional. Persons form a community only in the measure they freely respond to a unifying intention, i.e., to an act intending each of them, not in isolation, but as related to the others. This actual intention of unity, institutionally embodied and acknowledged by the plurality of persons as having a claim on them, is the power which forms community. Such power, in general, is authority.

But a community of persons can be conceived in radically different ways that profoundly affect both the role of authority and the type of response it calls for. For example, community may be conceived either as an end in itself or as a means to something else. In the latter case, we have what may be called *organic* community. It arises from a coordination of all the various functions performed by members of the group to achieve some further good in which each one has an interest but which can be attained only by their concerted efforts. In such community, persons are not united as persons but rather as workers or functionaries.

In contrast with this, we have *personal* community where the unity of persons is viewed as an end in itself. Here persons are united, not in terms of their functional relationships to a further goal, but in terms of their very reality as persons. The ultimate good they seek is their loving interrelation as persons, the good of communion and fellowship. To this end, everything else is subordinated. Thus, while organic community aims at the maximum functional efficiency consistent with the fact that its functionaries are also persons, personal community aims at maximum personal reciprocity and diversifies itself in functions only as needed for such reciprocity.

In communities so different, the formative power of community (authority) is also bound to be different and act differently. In one case, authority is indeed the power in charge of unifying actions through rules. In the other, however, it is the power dedicated to unifying persons through love. Instead of seeking primarily to impose order, authority in personal community looks to promote consensus—a genuine thinking, feeling, and willing together of all the members. Whereas in organic community, the main task of authority is to control and direct the common enterprise through binding decisions. Here it is, first of all, to embody and show forth a love that encompasses all the members and, secondly, to offer itself wholeheartedly in the service of their union as a continuing catalyst concord, a kind of focusing agent for the converging desires of the individual members to be each one for all the others as fruitfully and inclusively as possible.

Moreover, just as authority differs in the two communities, so also does the response it calls for. Since persons are involved in organic community only in terms of an aspect of themselves, namely, their function as workers, their commitment to such community and its controlling power can never to absolute or total. It is quite properly limited to what the achievement of the goal requires. On the other hand, the universal love that animates personal community calls for a total response in kind. Any self-seeking is incompatible with the intention to be wholly for others.

This is something that needs emphasis today. If, in the light of our distinction, religious authorities are inconsistent when they operate "organically" and still expect total obedience, religious subjects are no less mistaken when they think partial commitment suffices for personal community. In other words, the current demand for less legalism and more love cannot be taken onesidedly. It cuts both ways.

Another member of the Committee, Fr. Matthew J. O'Connell, next elaborated a theological context in which Fr. Johann's distinction on types of community might be applied specifically to religious life and Jesuit life. He wished to avoid looking on religious life as a series of "discrete moments," each one of which is an act of obedience to a superior. What is necessary, he observed, is that the whole life of Christ in relation to his Father and his life in relation to his fellows be seen as an exemplary totality and unity. Obedience to the Father is seen as part of the totality and rising from it. The same should apply to obedience

in religious life. The community of persons is the totality in which decisions and obedience to decisions have life and meaning.

Fr. O'Connell stressed that the superior is an agent for community in such a community as Fr. Johann envisages. Yet if union and love are the good of such a community, how does the work of the community—an area where obedience's function is most obvious—avoid being an afterthought, on the one hand, or, on the other, avoid being constitutive of its unity to the point that the community becomes a functional entity? He suggested that perhaps the dilemma can be resolved by considering the nature of the Church and the nature of a religious order within the Church. He wrote:

The Church is a community which is an eschatological reality, and whose finite inner form is love: love in response to the love of God for men, love that reaches out to draw other men into this response to God in Christ and to make the boundaries of the visible Church coincide with the totality of that humanity which is loved by God and called to love in return.

The Church is thus an anticipation of the community of the blessed. But only in a limited way can it be said to be a replica of the heavenly Church of the world-to-come. It is a replica or anticipation because the Spirit at work in this community's response to God is the Spirit whose activity creates the *eschaton* in the Church as it has already created it, fully and definitively in Christ and definitively, even if not yet fully, in the other blessed. But it is a replica in only a limited way because the Spirit's work is not yet fully accomplished:

1) in the members of the Church. Therefore the ideal of *"ama et fac quod vis"* is not fully realizable, and we have the role of law, as law is envisaged both *philosophically*: the need of authority to make practical decisions, and *theologically*: law as light, law as the expression of ideals, and law (universal and particular decisions of authority) as the embodiment of divine providence for the pilgriming Church of a particular time and place.

2) in the world. The communion of the members of the Church is, therefore, not yet the final communion of those who contemplate the unveiled glory of God. It is the communion of those who contemplate God at work in history (especially in Christ) and are led to enter into the active love of Christ and his Spirit that would extend the communion which is the Church to the boundaries of humanity itself. . . .

If this is so, then the "work" of extending communion becomes thematic in the communion itself. The communion in "work" even becomes the center around which the communion itself develops. Is this to state a contradiction? Only if "work" is taken in too narrow and functional a way. The real "work" of the Church is not this or that particular kind of apostolate, but precisely the extension of that communion which is the very essence of the Church (Church as community). This is a work in which the quality of the person, as caught up totally into communion with the other members of the Church, is decisive for the work to be done.

Within this all embracing work, there is work in the narrower sense of particular apostolic occupations whereby and wherein one accomplishes the ultimate work, e.g., teaching, nursing, etc. There can, obviously, be no complete dichotomy between the goal and the way to it, between the ultimate work and the particular job, because it is through the latter that the former is (at least partially) accomplished. But it is the former which is a constitutive element of the communion itself, not the latter. If the particular job is made central and decisive, then the community will tend to be thought of in more or less exclusively functional terms.

A religious order is the Church *in parvo* (there are numerous qualifications required, but these need not be made for our purposes here). It is a group of persons who are united as persons, as men committed to a total response of love for God and men in answer to the call of God. Because of this total commitment, religious life, like the Church, is an anticipation of the eschatological state of man, but it is precisely only an anticipation (not a partial verification, but an analogous verification). Those who enter into a religious community are pilgrims, moving toward the perfect communion of heaven. The communion which is a religious order serves here on earth that ultimate communion of the blessed, both within the order (in its members) and in the double apostolate of deepening the communion of charity within the Church and of extending it to others.

The communion which is a religious order is, like the Church, hierarchically structured. This means simply that Christ is re-presented, by those in authority, in his role as source of love, as model, as guide, as energizing force. (Cf., for example, the picture given by St. Ignatius of the ideal General of the Society in the *Constitutions*, IX [*Epitome* 781].) The primary (immediate) goal of the superior's activity is to help create communion and community; he also has a functional activity with regard to the particular works whereby the community implements its commitment to the Church and to the establishment and spread of that communion of love which is the "reign of God." But this functional activity is necessarily secondary (in the hierarchy of the superior's responsibilities, even if not perhaps in the division of his daily time and effort), because, unless the community is a true community, it will not serve the Church as a community (an order), but only as a conglomeration of individuals.

The central act of the superior can be said to be the Eucharistic liturgy, which he celebrates at the head of the community or which another celebrates in his place. The Eucharistic liturgy is central both really and symbolically, or both in significance and efficacy. For it gives ritual expression to what the Church and therefore the religious order is: the gathering of men united to each other and to Christ, and caught up into the movement of love for the Father which is the being of the Word and which is reflected with all the perfection possible to a creature in his humanity. In giving expression to what the Church is, the Eucharistic liturgy effectively draws the members of Christ more fully into the movement of charity.

If the primary role of the superior is to foster communion, the primary

response of the members of the community is their effective commitment (with all that this implies of self-dispossession, of emergence from egoism) to communion or the union of charity understood according to all its dimensions.

Fr. John J. McMahon, also a Committee member, drew from the *Constitutions* some indications of St. Ignatius' thinking on the question of union in the Society. These notes, attached to this report as Appendix A, were distributed to all members of the New York Province, together with the essays of Frs. Johann and O'Connell, in late April.

Immediate reactions

One of the more detailed responses to the three papers prepared by Frs. Johann, O'Connell and J. McMahon came from still another Committee member, Fr. James W. Gaffney. He found Fr. Johann's distinction on the types of community to be valuable for abstract analysis and for giving an orientation to one's thought on the general subject, but he looked for more notice of the facts, more attention to psychology and sociology. He remarked a similar lack in Fr. O'Connell's otherwise useful comments on the Church as a community pledged to enlarge itself. He wondered whether the distinction between "ultimate work" and "particular job" was really a valid one. Fr. Gaffney wrote:

Under one aspect, at least, my basic difficulty with Fr. Johann's paper is taken up by Fr. O'Connell in his effort to clarify "the relation between 'communion' and 'work'." I find this effort a helpful one, but with certain reservations. In the first place, I think that here too the sharp dichotomy between "unity" and "work" is too easily assumed to be a realistic one; collaboration and personal union are not, in the concrete, adequately distinct, any more than one's reality as a person is adequately distinct from one's reality as a worker. Accordingly, I disagree with Fr. O'Connell's apparent agreement with Fr. Johann that "unity" and "work" (understood as cooperative work) are well described by such terms of subordination as "primary" and "secondary." I suspect, too, that this issue is not likely to find a satisfactory resolution on the basis of theology unless preliminary work is done rather in the categories of psychology and sociology; psychological and sociological preconceptions are inevitably brought to the theological discussion and it is important that they should be conscious and plausible preconceptions. It might be that Fr. O'Connell's very useful correlation of the communal and missionary aspects of the Church would gain in definiteness if more psychological and sociological notions were employed. As it is, I have difficulty comprehending the logic by which a complete dichotomy is denied between the "ultimate work" and the "particular job" while at the same time it is affirmed that the former is and the latter is not "a constitutive element of the communion". . . . I would give some stress to this because of my conviction that in many instances the deterioration of commitment to the community derives mainly from the deterioration of respect for particular jobs. Here again, I have in mind the

sense in which the work is the *raison d'être* of unity, such that unity disintegrates to the extent that the work comes into disrepute.

In a second paper, entitled *From Jesuit Fellowship to Jesuit Authority*, Fr. Gaffney urged the potential value of a careful review of the famous *Deliberation of the First Fathers, 1539*. The decision taken at the close of this deliberation to yoke the first fathers of the Society under obedience to one of their number was the result of much prayer, thought, and democratic discussion. Fr. Gaffney suggested:

Perhaps it would not be irrelevant to conceive our own task in this time of widespread perplexity over those very issues of Jesuit fellowship and Jesuit authority, as one of replicating as far as our circumstances allow the task that they performed; determining, if we can, by a program of meditation and discussion, whether and in what sense we can admit the priority of their premises, approve the correctness of their conclusions, and trust the efficacy of their procedures.

Fr. W. Norris Clarke, another Committee member, also drafted an extensive response to the Johann-O'Connell papers. The positive statement of his views will be described in the last part of this report. It may help, however, to insert at this point his summary of special difficulties encountered today in discussions of Jesuit obedience of the judgment.

According to a growing consensus of our better interpreters of the spiritual life and Jesuit spirit, as I judge the trend at least and as seems to me the truth, obedience of judgment should mean this: that we use all the efforts of our good will to overcome any personal bias and prejudices, and open our intellects to understand the superior's command in the best possible light, give the maximum benefit of doubt to it and the best chance possible of proving itself efficacious. The will is used to bend the perhaps biased intellect, to let whatever *truth* and *good* there is appear to the full. It should not be used somehow to twist the intellect away from truth and reality to see things as they are not: this would be contrary to human dignity and the inviolability of the light of human intelligence on which the dignity of the person rests.

Difficulties in this Province (most of these are not peculiar to our Province but to our times):

1) *Lack of communication* between superiors and members. The result is that subjects do not understand the direction of superiors and do not see it as genuinely expressing the lived consensus, the lived unity of the community as a whole; nor do superiors always have an adequate feeling as a result, of just what the consensus and needs of their communities really are. Thus the authority is imposed from above as though arbitrarily from outside and not truly expressing the lived unity of the Society, its present lived wisdom.

2) *Appeal to tradition* for its own sake: Commands may appear to come (or

actually come) from the sheer motive of tradition, that we have always done things this way. In a world like ours of unprecedentedly rapid change, plus the keen awareness of young people of this, this appeal has very little effective convincing weight any more. In a world of change—philosophers, educators, social thinkers agree—the authentic principles of stability should be goals, ends, basic attitudes, not customary ways and means of achieving these, no matter how well these have worked before. There should be sense that commands proceed from the inner spirit of the Society informed by the present lived wisdom in practice of the community. The superior can no longer be an autonomous source of practical wisdom.

3) *Among the young, lack of adequate experience, understanding, esteem of authority-obedience as a lived concrete value* in their own lives before entering the Society. Overpermissive parents, teachers, abuse of principle of democracy, majority vote on everything.

4) *Overconcern, preoccupation with personal development*, self-fulfillment, fear of commitment to "lose themselves" in higher cause in order to find true self. Unconscious self-centeredness.

Absolutizing Society and subject

As an example of the tenor of the organized community discussions held in the Province on the Johann-O'Connell-McMahon papers, it may be useful to call attention to items recorded in a report on discussions attended by Jesuits of the Fordham University community. One notes that some felt the notion of authority as service had, in practice, been lost sight of until the Second Vatican Council called us to reconsider the question. Further, it was remarked, just as in sacramental theology the *ex opere operato* concept tended to mechanize the personal relationship which sacrament demands, so, too, in the matter of authority and obedience a similar notion had long prevailed and dimmed "the ideal of authority and obedience as an active, living dialogue on both sides."

According to one report of the Fordham discussion, some younger Jesuits voiced a fear of "absolutizing" the Society to the detriment of the greater good of the Church. They felt that if, after representation, consultation, and prayer, the individual's conscience told him he could not obey some precept of a superior, he should not obey it. Here seemed to be the truly crucial area in the entire debate today. In this connection, it was asked whether or not we may extend the idea of sin to include going against the greater good of the Church. It may be that this is the truer conception, but the report remarked that it remains matter for discussion.

In brief essays written after the main labors of the Committee had been completed, Fr. Johann dealt with the problems inherent in a tendency to "absolutize" subjectivity when discussing authority-obedience. He wrote:

. . . if morality means anything, it means not presuming to decide on my own about the justice and goodness of actions that affect others. The determination of the good is essentially a communal effort and presupposes on the part of all a willingness to submit to the requirements of community.

Obedience to legitimate authority is one such requirement. It does not, to be sure, guarantee the intrinsic reasonableness of my actions (nothing can guarantee that, although open and free discussion is a help). But obedience does make possible the insertion of my actions into a joint effort and alone assures their consistence with common life.

Subjectivity, therefore, is not an absolute value. It is essentially correlative to community. When it commits itself to the requirements of social process, its innovating capacity is a force for social reconstruction and reform. Only its contribution can forestall social sclerosis. But when subjectivity cuts loose from these requirements, it sinks into subjectivism and the harm it then does is more than subjective.

SYNTHETIC MOMENT: TOWARD TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS

When the Province Committee on Freedom-Authority-Obedience met in mid-June to review the status of its own thought and discussion, as well as that of so many interested members of the Province, on the questions proposed for consideration, the Committee's members agreed the moment was not at hand for attempting a grand synthesis or drafting final conclusions. Instead, the chairman was asked to draw up a report along the lines followed in these pages. Several strongly recommended, however, that the report include extended excerpts from a tentative summation, *Jesuit Obedience: Rationale and Mystique*, prepared by Fr. W. Norris Clarke, of the Committee. (Fr. Clarke's comments on special difficulties with respect to obedience in the Society have been recorded above.) The following paragraphs present his positive formulations. It will be obvious to any reader that they spring in part from a dialectical response to the stimulus of the earlier papers by Frs. Johann and O'Connell.

1) The meaning, need and value of obedience should all flow directly from the aim and nature of the Society. Our aim is the double one of personal salvation attained through an apostolic mode of life working in the Church for the salvation of others. In this integrated double goal the stress should be on the apostolic life as the primary center of our conscious concern. In view of our dignity as persons and sons of God, our own personal self-realization as images of God must not be diminished or destroyed in the process of working for the salvation of others: a human person can never be used as a mere instrument for attaining some other goal, no matter how noble.

However, the spirit of the Society is that this personal self-realization, though

a necessary condition for our remaining in the Society, should not be the central focus of our conscious concern. This should rather be apostolic love for others in the spirit of the world-redemptive love of Christ for the world in the Church. Self-realization should be able to be achieved primarily through this apostolic vocation, and should be subordinated to it in our conscious motivation. If a particular person, for whatever reasons, cannot live this way, but rather takes his own development as his central concern and motivation, with apostolic service as means to this, or subordinate in concern and motivation to this self-realization, then such a person is not really the type who can share the authentic spirit of the Society (or any apostolic order) and should not be encouraged to enter it, or be encouraged to leave as soon as possible when this becomes clear.

2) Granted the aim and nature of the Society as stated above, authority and its correlate of obedience flow immediately from this as providing the form which unites the multiplicity of members into the living unity proper to a human society. A society or community is impossible without unity and a principle of unity, and in a human society this unity and its informing principle must be incarnate in some visible way like man's own spirit. The superior is this visible incarnation of the unity of the Society, and obedience is the response of the members to this exigency of unity, their yielding to be so formed into one. Insofar as one truly loves the Society and its end and freely takes on this end by entering the Society, he should genuinely love and take on freely this bond of unity which is obedience, and freely live under it.

3) The purpose of authority is thus to help us achieve our goal in entering the Society and the goal of the Society as a whole. It is thus to achieve the common good or end. But since this includes both personal salvation as well as that of others, in the relation specified in No. 1 above, the superior's obligation and purpose is to act as effective unifying agent for this double goal held in careful balance, but with the apostolic effectiveness of the Society always receiving the primary focus of his direction, as should be the case in each member too. Despite the truth and fruitfulness of Fr. Johann's distinction between societies ordered primarily toward a goal outside of them and those whose own interior communion of love is their primary end, I do not think the Society can be classed as primarily the latter type. Though internal charity is an extremely important part of the Jesuit spirit and necessary for its healthy life and even attaining its apostolic aim, I think it would be unrealistic and somewhat misleading to conclude that the formation of a community of love is our primary aim or actually the dominant psychological motivation for our entering the Society. This is the motive dominating family life, friendship, perhaps even the Church as a whole (?). But the authentic and actual, historically verified Jesuit spirit seems to me to be that we enter to devote ourselves to the love and service of God in the Church and are willing for this end to give up the type of love we could have had in family, choosing our own friends, etc. We hope to find the latter too, but are willing to sacrifice it if necessary. In a word we are apostolate-centered men and any attempt to make the internal community of Jesuits themselves our primary concern would

be unrealistic and misguided. Yet it must be blended in as an important secondary concern.

4) The necessary role of unifying form and visible expression of the unity of the Society which is the meaning of authority and obedience must, however, be adapted to fit the kind of beings that are to be united. These are free human persons and redeemed sons of God. Hence they must be governed in a way that not only respects but actively fosters their human dignity, their freedom in committing themselves to the aim and life of the Society, and full unfolding of their talents and initiative. And since free obedience out of love and zeal for the common end is the only type appropriate to the members, authority should be exercised in such a way that it respects and tries to evoke to the full this kind of response from the members.

This implies a mature type of obedience and obedience appropriate to mature, highly educated and talented men, not that of the master-servant, the officer-soldier, or even the father-child relation, but a unique *sui generis* one. The model of the medieval monastery, where the abbot was often the only or principal wise man and many or most of the monks were simple and uneducated men, is not apt for the Society.

5) The above implies that to be truly effective, authority in the Society must be exercised so as to have the support to the greatest degree possible of the free willing consent of the governed. (This is a sound, almost necessary principle for the healthy functioning of any permanent type of human society.) This implies careful attention paid to "feedback" between the community and the superior, or adequate communication lines, so that the superior has the feel of the community opinion on significant issues, their agreement or not with his policies, leadership, projects, etc. This does not mean that he only does all the time what the community wants by popular majority vote, but that there be for the most part a flexible, healthy, reasonably human, lived consensus of the *sanior* and (hopefully) *major pars populi.* This should be a positive goal of high importance. In the modern world where the superior is usually no longer *the* expert but only the guide of many highly skilled specialists, this constant rhythm of interchange is essential both for effectiveness and contentment.

6) But despite the above need to maintain unity with his community and their living consensus behind his rule, if the superior is to be the effective form of unity of the community, *he* must after all consultation make *decisive* decisions, command where necessary, and enforce his decisions with firm mature vigor. There is certainly a point beyond which he must apply his authority with intransigence. Otherwise he will sacrifice respect and no longer fulfill his role as effective visible form of unity. At this point those under him must simply obey, and should do so cheerfully, understanding the necessity and intrinsic good of obedience and freely taking on its burden. Endless yielding to representation or pressure is demoralizing for all concerned and yields no lasting good fruits.

7) "Blind obedience" if taken literally would be quite contrary to the dignity of the human person and therefore unsound theologically as well as philo-

sophically. *I* must always judge in the case of every act I do whether it is right *for me* to act thus now, nor can I put off this responsibility on anyone else; otherwise it would cease to be an authentic human act, as St. Thomas himself says: "It is not up to the subject to pass judgment on the precept of his superior, but rather on whether he should obey the precept, for it is this which is his concern. For each one is held to examine his own acts according to the knowldege which he has from God, whether it be natural, acquired, or infused: for every man must act according to . . . reason" (*De Ver.*, q. 17, a5 ad 4m).

The language of "blind obedience" and other such phrases belongs to the rhetoric of a past age that no longer brings us light, and should be dropped from our spiritual instruction. It can only do harm today. Therefore the subject should always make the responsible judgment: (a) whether he who commands has the right to command and the human fitness to command here and now (not senile, temporarily irrational, etc.); (b) whether what is commanded is a sin or vitiates his conscience; (c) whether the command comes within the scope or domain to which obedience extends. In case of doubt he should, out of sincere respect for authority and humility, give the benefit of the doubt to the superior and only refuse when the case seems clear-cut to him. The above is traditional doctrine. Traditional practice and prudence would also dictate the following addition: (d) one can and often should refrain temporarily from obeying, especially in the case of a command from a distant and higher superior, when it seems clear that the command is impractical and would cause greater harm than good, or go against some higher good or objective that is, or should be, clearly willed by a reasonable superior; this occurs in the case of the superior's lack of knowledge of the immediate concrete situation or of some implication of his command, or one's own knowledge that the superior is going against some directive of a higher authority, etc. The sound application of this principle requires mature prudence, sincere good will, and devotion to the spirit and aim of the Society, and humble detachment from one's own self-interest in the issue. N.B.—The following principle, reported to be held by some, is *not* a sound one: as long as one agrees with the goal of the superior, the common good, it does not matter if one chooses one's own means to the end, even quite contrary to the explicit command of the superior.

8) The above flow from the application of human reason (philosophy plus prudence) to the problem. The wish to imitate Christ adds a deeper supernatural dimension. Just as he lovingly submitted his will to that of his Father and was obedient even unto the death of the Cross, so we should wish to become more one with him and participate in his obedience to his Father by obeying our superior as the Father, with greater love, humility, and self-detachment than reason alone would dictate, in the spirit of a mystical death to self (guided by prudence).

Matching the above specifically Christian mystery—dimension of obedience in the *subject*, there should be a corresponding "mystique" or supernatural dimension in the mode of governing of the *superior*. This should be a conscious

imitation of the model of governing given by our Lord himself: "not as lording it over one's subjects" but as one who serves, *servus servorum*, with humility and charity, truly seeking the greater good of the person commanded as integrated with the common good of the Society.

CONCLUSION

In place of the synthesis which is not here possible, indications may be given, by way of conclusion, of major areas whose elaboration would, it seems, provide such a synthesis or, at least, a document to serve as basis for profitable reflection. There is need of:

1) a broad philosophico-theological statement on authority and obedience in the Church:

a) *philosophical*: authority and obedience as a phenomenon proper to man as person (therefore in community);

b) *theological*: authority and obedience in the life of Christ and in the life of the Church, as both of these are presented in the New Testament; a broad sketch of the concrete forms which the authority-obedience relationship has taken over the centuries (in the Church at large and in the religious orders), as a revelation both of the essentials of this relationship and as a manifestation of the diversity of possible embodiments of the essentials.

2) a positive statement on Jesuit obedience (avoiding an older rhetoric which at best is a psychological block for many today, at worst connotes untenable ideas on obedience), stressing:

a) the *role of obedience* in the Jesuit apostolate and in the personal fulfillment in Christ of the individual Jesuit apostle;

b) the *role of the superior*: as instrument and expression of the Society's unity in Christ-at-work-in-the-world; as therefore the servant of the community and of the individual Jesuit;

c) the *role of authority-obedience as active dialogue* at the service of of the Society's apostolic work, and the accompanying need to set up institutional means for achieving this active dialogue (means that would vary according to type of community—one thinks of the obvious need, for instance, to study in detail the special psychological and sociological characteristics of community life and the appropriate authority-obedience relationships in a house of studies—composition of community, national culture, local milieu).

3) an attempt, well-grounded in a responsible moral theology, to face the question of "religious disobedience." (By a "responsible moral theology" is meant one aware of the evolving sensitivities of social and

individual conscience, and of the reflection of these in the documents of Vatican II; concretely, the increased sense of individual dignity, of social responsibility, of inalienable responsibility for personal judgment and action.) This question would not seem to be quite the same for the Society as for the Church. But to handle the question of "religious disobedience" correctly, adequately, and creatively for the Society, it must first be resolved on the larger scale of the Church.

APPENDIX

UNION IN THE SOCIETY

The purpose of these brief notes is to indicate the main lines of the thinking of St. Ignatius on union in the Society. Only the *Constitutions* are referred to. Three headings are made: The Importance of Union, Helps to Union, and the Difficulties.

Importance of union

The importance of union in the mind of St. Ignatius can be judged from the fact that he devotes the Eighth Part of the *Constitutions* to a consideration of the means for promoting union. Moreover, he states that to foster union was one of the primary intentions he had in writing the *Constitutions* (135).

"The Society cannot continue to exist or be governed and hence cannot attain its end, if the members have not been united among themselves and with their head" (655). The statement is not too strong; for a house divided against itself cannot stand.

"United by the bond of fraternal charity, the members will be able better and more effectively to devote themselves to the service of God and the help of the neighbor" (273). Hence, union is to be sought after, with the greatest possible care. It is to be sought after; it just does not happen.

Helps to union

1) Superiors have a special role to fulfill in fostering union, that is, the union of minds and hearts in charity and mutual love (821). Superiors should possess, as far as possible, the qualities Ignatius desired in the general (817).

Among these "gifts of God," they will have and manifest "love and care for their subjects" in such a way that the subjects become convinced that their superior has the knowledge, the will, and the ability to govern them well in the Lord (667). It will also help union, if the superior commands with circumspection and in an orderly way. He will more-

over show concern for the duty of subjects to obey by using all possible good will, modesty, and love in the Lord. At times he will leave something to their own choice when he sees that this will probably help them; at times he will yield to their wishes and go along with them, when he perceives that this will be more suitable (667). One beholds here the loving mind and heart of Ignatius for his men; he is concerned about building up union. One can understand why he wished the superior to be conspicuous for the splendor of charity and humility, virtues that will make him lovable to God and men (725).

2) Subjects likewise have a contribution to make to union. They will practice real obedience (84). For union in the Society is brought about in large measure by this kind of obedience, which must always be maintained in its vigor (659, 821).

Subjects moreover will have due regard for proper subordination. We must swim in channels. Superiors and subjects will observe this order: subjects will recur to their local superior; local superiors will recur to the provincials; provincials will recur to the general (662).

3) Both subjects and superiors have a common contribution to make towards union. "The chief bond of union in the Society is the love of God and our Lord Jesus Christ." If, therefore, the superior and the inferior are strongly united to the divine and highest Goodness, they will very easily become united among themselves (671). To be united to God means to make a total gift of oneself to the service of God, without the option of ever taking it back (283). The "*sume et suscipe*" of the *Exercises* and partial commitment are incompatible. Ignatius wanted no part-time religious in the Society.

Other helps to union are: careful selection of candidates (657); frequent exhortations on union (280); consensus and conformity in interior and external matters (273, 671, 676); knowledge of the language of the region where one resides (214); contempt of material gain (671); manifestations of conscience (91–97).

Difficulties

As regards difficulties, St. Ignatius writes that the more difficult it is to bring about union between the members and the head and among the members themselves, since they are scattered widely in many parts of the world, the more vigorous must be the search for the means that will build up union. Moreover, usually the men will be learned and of great influence (655, 666). In view of these and other difficulties, St. Ignatius presents his programs for union in the Eighth Part of the *Constitutions*.

Whatever is opposed to union, is not to be permitted (273).

The lethal enemy of union is love of oneself (*sui ipsius amor*) (671).

Anyone who is discovered as the author of division or dissension in a community must be separated from it; if this remedy does not suffice, he should be dismissed from the Society (664, 665).

He warns that "very difficult characters" are not to be admitted into the Society (152). Men who have not gotten their vices under good control will not brook order, much less union which in Christ our Lord is so necessary for preserving the good estate and the way of acting of this Society (657).

J. McMahon, S.J.
Auriesville, N.Y.

READERS' FORUM

Priest and Poet

Congratulations to you for the extreme readability lately of articles and reviews in WOODSTOCK LETTERS. I like especially the timeliness of many subjects discussed, often timeless old subjects, and the situation of these discussions in a Jesuit context, welcome in particular to readers of your review.

Many old Jesuit ideas come up for discussion, rethinking, and re-evaluation, in these *aggiornamento* days. Much now is proposed both for discard and for adoption. Liturgical worship, community-life solitariness, university proceedings and franchise, "new" and "old breed" differences are a few of the many old subjects that here and there are by now nearly rather thoroughly discussed. One trained as a Jesuit in a literary tradition of humanist scholarship rejoices to find that speculation about art in any of its forms still goes on at a high level in our courses (or houses) of formation and in our reviews.

In all our much-needed restatements of value and concern, the central question for anyone who makes an act of faith in the 21st Ecumenical Council of the Church, Vatican II, and in the 31st General Congregation of the Society needs, one supposes, to be that of a thoroughgoing renewal of Christian conscience. One looks for an updated sense of shared purpose, inspiration, and motivation, so as to live a religious life with Christ and in Christ for the salvation of the world. The Society's mission is an extension of Christ's ongoing mission, the corporate Church.

Dialogue by itself may not far advance such a realized sense of personal renewal, especially not so when its conclusions on basic issues are still for the most part left "up in the air": old wine in new wineskins? or new wine in old wineskins? or a new form of rhetoric whose ferment has little to do with wine or vines or vineyards, old or new, in the exacting senses of the Gospel metaphor "I am the vine; you are the branches"? Dialogue is, of course, in itself valuable for persons who live in community. A realized sense of renewal takes time, to be sure, and makes special and different practical demands on different individual temperaments, in particular on different priests. Jesuits are wondering: when will *les mots officiels* becomes *les mots actuels*, the operative words of the Society's government and occupation. No one needs now just to wait for others, nor to do much further

talking. One seldom advances without some risks and losses; whenever one has made a choice of ways, there remains in memory ever afterwards "the road not taken": "Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—/ I took the one less traveled by, / And that has made all the difference." One can seldom go back.

John L'Heureux, S.J.: priest and poet

With notable well-earned authority, Fr. John L'Heureux, S.J., now (I understand) a welcome artist in studies at Harvard University, has addressed himself without clichés (WL, Summer, 1967) to a subject of perennial concern for almost all Jesuit men of letters: "The Word: For Priest and Poet." Admirably he calls attention to both differences and likenesses between the two charisms, priestly and poetic, each an uncommon grace. He does not gloss over difficulties from either side when he asks if these two charisms might sometimes in one person intersect and interact. He does not sound as though by his own answers he thought he were forever settling the questions he asks: "Does the charism of the priest leave room for the grace of the poet?" As he would presumably be the first to agree, much that he says by way of premise, example, and conclusion is arguable, highly selective as to definition and a bit off-center by way of example. Personally, I should not agree with his final reasoned judgment, "When a priest becomes a poet (an unlikely event) he functions only minimally as a priest." Unlike me, Fr. L'Heureux speaks with a double authority; his conclusion is understandable; maybe he is right. Still, in the light of English speaking poets as capable as Blessed Robert Southwell and Gerard Manley Hopkins (who once thought as Fr. L'Heureux now thinks, but later changed his mind), as capable as Peter Levi and Daniel Berrigan, all dedicated and energetic Jesuit priests, and in the light of the poetries from other religious families, like William Dunbar's, a 16th century Franciscan, or Bro. Antoninus', William Everson's, a 20th century Dominican, one may all the same wonder if Fr. L'Heureux may not have pushed his thesis too far. Does his philosophical analysis account for actual history? Oppositions and antagonisms are admittedly rife between these two vocations of priest (or religious) and of poet, but they are not always irreconcilable. I should wonder if in spite of understandable difficulties and differences they ever need absolutely to be at total war. Such a dual vocation need not, I believe, with the grace of God and with prayer, lead to schizophrenia.

Leo Cardinal Suenens, speaking to artists on behalf of Pope Paul VI, in one of the concluding messages of Vatican II, December 8, 1965 (the only official notice I remember that the Church has ever taken of artists at an ecumenical council) reminded them: "You are our friends. The Church has long since joined in alliance with you. . . . Today, as yesterday, the Church needs you and turns to you."

A trapped man

So, too, the Church needs as never before the word of her priests. As Fr. L'Heureux says, "the poet and the priest create through words." Lucky for the Church, and for all men, when two Pentecostal gifts of empowerment, or charisms, are bestowed on one per-

son. Almost all this that I have written to you is arguable, and much, I expect, is unintentionally—as Fr. John Courtney Murray might say, "adventurously mistaken." But on this last point I feel sure, and know, that I am in the right. There is a quality of uniqueness about any worthwhile vocation. The hard and honest irony and the verbal complexity by which a modern poet goes about telling his vision to others is not a quality that needs to be denied to the creative word of the priest. Our Blessed Lord often used irony. Strains and risks are built-in difficulties that the priest-poet, like other poets, must face and overcome pretty much alone. Unless one first sees something of consequence, there may be little point in telling others what one sees in words. What would be the merit of any vocation that did not experience tension or strain? What would be the value of any rare God-given gift, or charism, that did not impose some obligation of service? In a literal sense, the poet (priest, or not) is a trapped person whose charism obliges him to go on reasoning "obliquely on sensitive particulars" no matter what the high cost (headaches and heartaches) of personal strain. Willy-nilly, that is a conviction that all poets share. One cannot simply refuse to admit the existence of a daemon, good or bad. The Jesuit's subtle training in the discernment of spirits may oblige a priest to recognize that his particular daemon wants him to speak God's creative word in poetic lines. The "verbal discipline" exacted of a poet could turn out to be a form of asceticism, like scholarship, that might help a priest in his imitation of Christ. There is poetry and there is drama in every offering of the Mass.

As priests and poets go on working together in the endeavor to build God's kingdom here in this imperfect world, I see no compelling reason to imagine why their two gracious charisms of speech, or of tongues, as in Fr. L'Heureux's own case, may not sometimes speak happily in concert.

"Bring me my bow of burning gold!
  Bring me my arrows of desire!
Bring me my spear! Oh clouds, unfold!
  Bring me my chariot of fire!

"I will not cease from mental fight,
  Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem,
  In England's green and pleasant land."

WILLIAM T. NOON, S.J.
LE MOYNE COLLEGE
SYRACUSE, NEW YORK

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